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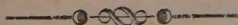
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AND

MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS;

BY

JAMES (STEPHEN.)



PHILADELPHIA:  
CAREY AND HART.

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# MISCELLANIES,

BY

JAMES STEPHEN.

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LIFE OF WILLIAM WILBERFORCE BY HIS SONS.\*

(Edinburgh Review, 1838.)

THESE volumes record the Life of a man who, in an age fertile beyond most others in illustrious characters, reached, by paths till then unexplored, an eminence never before attained by any private member of the British Parliament. We believe we shall render an acceptable service to our readers, by placing them in possession of a general outline of this biography.

William Wilberforce was born at Hull on the 24th of August, 1759. His father, a merchant of that town, traced his descent from a family which had for many generations possessed a large estate at Wilberfoss, in the East Riding of the county of York. From that place was derived the name which the taste, or caprice of his later progenitors, modulated into the form in which it was borne by their celebrated descendant. His mother was nearly allied to many persons of consideration; amongst whom are numbered the present Bishops of Winchester and Chester, and the members of the great London banking-house, of which Lord Carrington was the head.

\* Life of William Wilberforce. By his Sons ROBERT ISAAC WILBERFORCE, M. A., Vicar of East Farlough, late Fellow of Oriel College; and SAMUEL WILBERFORCE, M. A., Rector of Brighstone. 4 vols. 8vo. London, 1838.



The father of William Wilberforce died before his son had completed his tenth year; and the ample patrimony which he then inherited was afterwards largely increased on the death of a paternal uncle, to whose guardianship his childhood was committed. By that kinsman he was placed at a school in the immediate neighbourhood of his own residence at Wimbledon, in Surry. The following are the characteristic terms in which, at the distance of many years, the pupil recorded his recollections of this first stage of his literary education:—"Mr. Chalmers, the master, himself a Scotchman, had an usher of the same nation, whose red beard, for he scarcely shaved once a month, I shall never forget. They taught French, Arithmetic, and Latin. With Greek we did not much meddle. It was frequented chiefly by the sons of merchants, and they taught therefore every thing, and nothing. Here I continued some time as a parlour boarder. I was sent at first among the lodgers, and I can remember, even now, the nauseous food with which we were supplied, and which I could not eat without sickness."

His early years were not, however, to pass away without some impressions more important, if not more abiding, than those which had been left on his sensitive nerves by the red beard of one of his Scotch teachers, and by the ill savour of the dinners of the other. His uncle's wife was a disciple of George Whitfield, and under her pious care he acquired a familiarity with the Sacred Writings, and a habit of devotion of which the results were perceptible throughout the whole of his more mature life. While still a school-boy, he had written several religious letters, "much in accordance with the opinions which he subsequently adopted," and which, but for his peremptory interdict, the zeal of some indiscreet friend would have given to the world. "If I had staid with my uncle, I should probably have been a bigoted despised Methodist," is the conclusion which Mr. Wilberforce formed on looking back to this period, after an interval of nearly thirty years. His mother's foresight, apprehending this result, induced her to withdraw him from his uncle's house, and to place him under the charge of the master of the endowed school at Pocklington, in Yorkshire,—a sound and well-beneficed divine, whose orthodoxy would seem to have been entirely unalloyed by the rigours of Methodism. The boy was

encouraged to lead a life of idleness and pleasure, wasting his time in a round of visits to the neighbouring gentry, to whom he was recommended by his social talents, especially by his rare skill in singing; while, during his school vacations, the religious impressions of his childhood were combated by a constant succession of such convivial gaieties as the town of Hull could afford. Ill as this discipline was calculated to lay the foundation of good intellectual habits, it was still less adapted to substitute for the excitement and dogmatism of Whitfield's system, a piety resting on a nobler and more secure basis. One remarkable indication, however, was given of the character by which his future life was to be distinguished. He placed in the hands of a schoolfellow, (who survives to record the fact,) a letter to be conveyed to the editor of the York paper, which he stated to be "in condemnation of the odious traffic in human flesh."—On the same authority he is reported to have "greatly excelled all the other boys in his compositions, though seldom beginning them till the eleventh hour."

From school Mr. Wilberforce was transferred at the age of seventeen, to St. John's College, Cambridge. We trust that the picture which he has drawn of the education of a young gentleman of fortune, in an English university, towards the close of the last century, will seem an incredible fiction to the present members of that learned society. "The Fellows of the College," he says, "did not act towards me the part of Christians, or even of honest men. Their object seemed to be to make and keep me idle. If ever I appeared studious, they would say to me—'Why, in the world should a man of your fortune trouble himself with fagging?' I was a good classic, and acquitted myself well in the College examinations, but mathematics, which my mind greatly needed, I almost entirely neglected, and was told that I was too clever to require them."

With such a preparation for the duties of active life, Mr. Wilberforce passed at a single step from the University to the House of Commons. The general election of 1780, occurring within less than a month from the completion of his twenty-first year, "the affection of his townsmen, 'not unaided by' an expenditure of from eight to nine thousand pounds," placed him at the head of the poll for "the town and county of Hull." Although at this time Mr. Wilberforce states himself to have been "so ignorant of general

society as to have come up to London stored with arguments to prove the authenticity of Rowley's Poems," yet so rich and so accomplished an aspirant could not long be excluded from the mysteries of the world of fashion which now burst upon him. Five clubs enrolled him among their members. He "chatted, played at cards, or gambled" with Fox, Sheridan, and Fitzpatrick—fascinated the Prince of Wales by his singing at Devonshire House—produced inimitable imitations of Lord North's voice and manner—sang catches with Lord Sandwich—exchanged epigrams with Mrs. Creeve—partook of a Shaksperian dinner at the Boar, in East Cheap—"shirked the Duchess of Gordon"—and danced till five in the morning at Almack's. The lassitude of fashionable life was effectually relieved by the duties or amusements of a Parliamentary career, not unattended by some brilliant success. Too rich to look to public service as a means of subsistence, and, at this period, ambitious rather of distinction than of eminence, Mr. Wilberforce enjoyed the rare luxury of complete independence. Though a decided opponent of the North American war, he voted with Lord North against Sir Fletcher Norton's re-election as Speaker, and opposed Mr. Pitt on the second occasion of his addressing the House, although he was already numbered amongst the most intimate of his friends. This alliance, commenced apparently at the University, had ripened into an affectionate union which none of the vicissitudes of political life could afterwards dissolve. They partook in each other's labours and amusements, and the zest with which Mr. Pitt indulged in these relaxations, throws a new and unexpected light on his character. They joined together in founding a club, at which, for two successive winters, Pitt spent his evenings, while, at Mr. Wilberforce's villa at Wimbledon, he was established rather as an inmate than as a guest. There he indulged himself even in boisterous gaiety; and it strangely disturbs our associations to read of the son and rival of Lord Chatham rising early in the morning to sow the flower-beds with the fragments of a dress-hat with which Lord Harrowby had come down from the opera. There also were arranged fishing and shooting parties; in one of which the future champion of the anti-Gallican war narrowly escaped an untimely grave from the misdirected gun of his friend. On the banks of Windermere also, Mr. Wilberforce pos-

sessed a residence, where the Parliamentary vacation found him "surrounded with a goodly assortment of books." But the discovery was already made that the autumnal *ennui* of the fashionable world might find relief among the lakes and mountains of Westmoreland, and "boating, riding, and continual parties" fully occupied the time which had been devoted to retirement and study. From these *amici fures temporis* Mr. Wilberforce escaped, in the autumn of 1783, to pass a few weeks with Mr. Pitt in France. They readily found introductions to the supper table of Marie Antoinette, and the other festivities of Fontainebleau. Louis XVI. does not appear to have made a very flattering impression on his young guests. "The King," says Mr. Wilberforce, in a letter written about that time, "is so strange a being of the hog kind, that it is worth going a hundred miles for a sight of him, especially a boar-hunting." At Paris "he received with interest the hearty greetings which Dr. Franklin tendered to a rising member of the English Parliament, who had opposed the American war."

Graver cares awaited Mr. Wilberforce's return to England. He arrived in time to second Mr. Pitt's opposition to the India Bill, and to support him in his memorable struggle against the majority of the House of Commons. The Coalition was now the one subject of popular invective; and, at a public meeting in the Castle-yard at York, in March, 1784, Mr. Wilberforce condemned their measures, in a speech which was received with the loudest applause. The praise of James Boswell is characteristic at once of the speaker and of the critic. In an account of the scene which he transmitted to Mr. Dundas, "I saw," writes Boswell, "what seemed a mere shrimp, mount upon the table, but, as I listened, he grew and grew, until the shrimp became a whale." A still more convincing attestation to his eloquence is to be found in the consequences to which it led. Mr. Wilberforce attended the meeting with the avowed purpose of defeating, at the approaching election, the predominant influence of the great Whig families of Yorkshire, and with the secret design of becoming a candidate for the county. During his speech the cry of "Wilberforce and Liberty" was raised by the crowd; and the transition was obvious and readily made, to "Wilberforce and the Representation of Yorkshire." The current of popular favour flowed strongly in his support. He was



the opponent of the Coalition and the India Bill, and the friend and zealous partisan of Mr. Pitt; then rich in hereditary honours, in personal renown, and in the brightest promise. Large subscriptions defrayed the expense of the contest, and, without venturing to the poll, his Whig opponents surrendered to him a seat, which he continued to occupy, without intermission, for many successive Parliaments. With this memorable triumph Mr. Wilberforce closed his twenty-fifth year, and returned to London in possession of whatever could gratify the wishes, or exalt the hopes of a candidate for fame, on the noblest theatre of civil action which the world had thrown open to the ambition of private men.

The time had, however, arrived at which a new direction was to be given to the thoughts and pursuits of this favourite of nature and fortune. Before taking his seat in the House of Commons, as member for the county of York, Mr. Wilberforce, accompanied by some female relations, and by Isaac Milner, the late Dean of Carlisle, undertook a journey to the south of France, and thence through Switzerland to the German Spa. This expedition, interrupted by a temporary return to England, during the winter of 1784-5, continued some months, and forms a memorable era in his life. The lessons which he had learned in childhood at Wimbledon had left an indelible impression on a mind peculiarly susceptible of every tender and profound emotion. The dissipation of his subsequent days had retarded the growth of those seeds of early piety, but had not entirely choked them. To the companions of his youth many indications had occasionally been given, that their gay associate was revolving deeper thoughts than formed the staple of their ordinary social intercourse. These were now to take entire possession of his mind, and to regulate the whole of his future conduct. The opinions of Whitfield had found a more impressive expositor than the good aunt who had originally explained and enforced them.

Isaac Milner was a remarkable man, and but for the early possession of three great ecclesiastical sinecures, which enabled him to gratify his constitutional indolence, would probably have attained considerable distinction in physical and in theological science. In a narrow collegiate circle he exercised a colloquial despotism akin to that which Johnson had established, and to which Parr aspired, amongst



the men of letters and the statesmen of their age. But Milner's dogmatism was relieved by a tenderness of heart not inferior to that of the great moralist himself; and was informed by a theology incomparably more profound, and more fitted to practical uses, than that of the redoubted grammarian. He was amongst the dearest of the friends of Mr. Wilberforce, and now became his preceptor and his spiritual guide.

The day dreams on the subject of religious conversions, which they who list may hear on every side, are, like other dreams, the types of substantial realities. Though the workings of the Almighty hand are distinctly visible only to the omniscient eye, yet even our narrow faculties can often trace the movements of that perennial under-current which controls the sequences of human life, and imparts to them the character of moral discipline. In the comprehensive scheme of the Supreme Governor of the world for the progressive advancement of the human race, are comprised innumerable subordinate plans for the improvement of the individuals of which it is composed; and whether we conceive of these as the result of some preordained system, or as produced by the immediate interposition of God, we equally acknowledge the doctrine of Divine Providence, and refer to him as the author of those salutary revolutions of human character, of which the reality is beyond dispute. It is a simple matter of fact, of which these volumes afford the most conclusive proof, that, about the twenty-sixth year of his age, Mr. Wilberforce was the subject of such a change; and that it continued for half a century to give an altered direction to his whole system of thought and action. Waiving all discussion as to the mode in which the divine agency may have been employed to accomplish this result, it is more to our purpose to inquire in what the change really consisted, and what were the consequences for which it prepared the way.

The basis of Mr. Wilberforce's natural character was, an intense fellow-feeling with other men. No one more readily adopted the interests, sympathized with the affections, or caught even the transient emotions of those with whom he associated. United to a melancholy temperament, this disposition would have produced a moon-struck and sentimental "Man of Feeling;" but, connected as it was with the most mercurial gaiety of heart, the effect was as

exhilarating as it was impressive. It was a combination of the deep emotions, real or pretended, of Rousseau, with the restless vivacity of Voltaire. Ever ready to weep with those that wept, his nature still more strongly prompted him to rejoice with those that rejoiced. A passionate lover of society, he might (to adopt, with some little qualification, a well-known phrase) have passed for the brother of every man, and for the lover of every woman with whom he conversed. Bayard himself could not have accosted a damsel of the houses of Longueville or Coligni with a more heart-felt and graceful reverence, than marked his address to every female, however homely or however humble. The most somnolent company was aroused and gladdened at his presence. The heaviest countenance reflected some animation from his eye; nor was any one so dull as not to yield some sparks of intellect when brought into communication with him. Few men ever loved books more, or read them with a more insatiate thirst; yet, even in the solitude of his library, the social spirit never deserted him. The one great object of his studies was, to explore the springs of human action, and to trace their influence on the character and happiness of mankind.

To this vivid sympathy in all human interests and feelings were united the talents by which it could be most gracefully exhibited. Mr. Wilberforce possessed histrionic powers of the highest order. If any caprice of fortune had called him to the stage, he would have ranked amongst its highest ornaments. He would have been irresistible before a jury, and the most popular of preachers. His rich mellow voice, directed by an ear of singular accuracy, gave to his most familiar language a variety of cadence, and to his most serious discourse a depth of expression, which rendered it impossible not to listen. Pathos and drollery—solemn musings and playful fancies—yearnings of the soul over the tragic, and the most contagious mirth over the ludicrous events of life, all rapidly succeeding each other, and harmoniously because unconsciously blended, threw over his conversation a spell which no prejudice, dulness, or ill-humour could resist. The courtesy of the heart, and the refinement of the most polished society, united to great natural courage, and a not ungraceful consciousness of his many titles to respect, completed the charm which his presence infallibly exercised.

To these unrivalled social powers was added a not less remarkable susceptibility of enjoyment, in whatever form it presented itself. The pleasures, such as they are, of a very fastidious taste, he did not cultivate. If Haydn was not to be had, a street ballad would seem to shoot quicksilver through his frame. In the absence of Pitt or Canning, he would delight himself in the talk of the most matter of fact man of his constituents from the Cloth hall at Leeds. With a keen perception of beauty and excellence in nature, literature, and art, the alchymy of his happy frame extracted some delight from the dullest pamphlet, the tamest scenery, and the heaviest speech. The curiosity and the interest of childhood, instead of wearing out as he grew older, seemed to be continually on the increase. This peculiarity is noticed by Sir James Mackintosh, with his accustomed precision and delicacy of touch, in the following words:—‘Do you remember Madame de Maintenon’s exclamation, “Oh the misery of having to amuse an old king!—qui n’est pas amusable?” Now, if I was called upon to describe Wilberforce, I should say, he was the most “amusable” man I ever met with in my life. Instead of having to think what subjects will interest him, it is perfectly impossible to hit on one that does not interest him. I never saw any one who touched life at so many points; and it is the more remarkable in a man who is supposed to live absorbed in the contemplations of a future state. When he was in the House of Commons, he seemed to have the freshest mind of any man there. There was all the charm of youth about him; and he is quite as remarkable in this bright evening of his days as when I saw him in his glory many years ago.’

Such a temperament combined with such an education, might have given the assurance of a brilliant career, but hardly of any enduring fame. Ordinary foresight might have predicted that he would be courted or feared by the two great parties in the House of Commons; that he would be at once the idol and the idolater of society; and that he would shine in Parliament and in the world, in the foremost rank of intellectual voluptuaries. But that he should rise to be amongst the most laborious and eminent benefactors of mankind was beyond the divination of any human sagacity. It is to the mastery which religion acquired over his mind that this elevation is to be ascribed.

It is not wonderful that many have claimed Mr. Wilberforce as the ornament of that particular section of the Christian Church which has assumed or acquired the distinctive title of Evangelical; nor that they should resent as injurious to their party any more catholic view of his real character. That he became the secular head of this body is perfectly true; but no man was ever more exempt from bondage to any religious party. Immutably attached to the cardinal truths of revelation, he was in other respects a latitudinarian. "Strange," he would say, "that Christians have taken as the badge of separation the very Sacrament which their Redeemer instituted as the symbol of their union." And in this spirit, though a strict conformist to the Church of England, he occasionally attended the public worship of those who dissent from her communion, and maintained a cordial fellowship with Christians of every denomination. The opinion may, indeed, be hazarded that he was not profoundly learned in any branch of controversial theology, nor much qualified for success in such studies. His mind had been little trained to systematic investigation either in moral or physical science. Though the practice of rhetoric was the business of his mature life, the study of logic had not been the occupation of his youth. Scepticism and suspended judgment were foreign to his mental habits. Perhaps no man ever examined more anxiously the meaning of the sacred writings, and probably no one ever more readily admitted their authority. Finding in his own bosom ten thousand echoes to the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, he wisely and gladly received this silent testimony to their truth, and gave them a reverential admission. Instead of consuming life in a protracted scrutiny into the basis of his belief, he busied himself in erecting upon it a superstructure of piety and of virtue. In fact, his creed differed little, if at all, from that of the vast majority of Protestants. The difference between him and his fellow Christians consisted chiefly in the uses to which his religious opinions were applied. The reflections which most men habitually avoid he as habitually cherished. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say of him that God was in all his thoughts. He surveyed human life as the eye of an artist ranges over a landscape, receiving innumerable intimations which escape any less practised observer. In every faculty he recognised a sacred trust; in every material object an indication of the divine

wisdom and goodness; in every human being an heir of immortality; in every enjoyment a proof of the divine benignity; in every affliction an act of parental discipline. The early development of this habit of mind appears to have been attended with much dejection and protracted self-denial; but the gay and social spirit of the man gradually resumed its dominion. A piety so profound was never so entirely free from asceticism. It was allied to all the pursuits, and all the innocent pleasures of life,—we might almost say to all its blameless whims and humours. The frolic of earlier days had indeed subsided, and the indestructible gaiety of his heart had assumed a more gentle and cautious character. But with a settled peace of mind, and a self-government continually gaining strength, he felt that perfect freedom which enabled him to give the reins to his constitutional vivacity; and the most devotional of men was at the same time the most playful and exhilarating companion. His presence was as fatal to dulness as to immorality. His mirth was as irresistible as the first laughter of childhood.

The sacred principles which he had now adopted were not sufficient entirely to cure those intellectual defects to which a neglected education and the too early enjoyment of wealth and leisure had given the force of inveterate habit. His conversation was remarkable for interminable digressions, and was no inapt index of the desultory temper of his mind. But even this discursive temper was made subservient to the great objects of his life. It exhibited itself in the rapid transitions which he was continually making from one scheme of benevolence to another; and in that singular faculty which he possessed of living at once as the inhabitant of the visible and invisible worlds. From the shadows of earth to the realities of man's future destiny he passed with a facility scarcely attainable to those who have been trained to more continuous habits of application. Between the oratory and the senate—devotional exercises and worldly pursuits—he had formed so intimate a connexion, that the web of his discourse was not rarely composed of very incongruous materials. But this fusion of religious with secular thoughts added to the spirit with which every duty was performed, and to the zest with which every enjoyment was welcomed; and if the want of good mental discipline was perceptible to the last, the triumph of Chris-



tianity was but the more conspicuous in that inflexible constancy of purpose with which he pursued the great works of benevolence to which his life was consecrated. No aspirant for the honours of literature, or for the dignities of the Woolsack, ever displayed more decision of character than marked his labours for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

Some notice, however brief, of that great event is indispensable in the most rapid survey of the life of Mr. Wilberforce. The aspirations of his school-boy days on this subject have been already noticed. That early impression was deep and abiding. At the commencement of his Parliamentary career, in 1780, his inquiries into the system of colonial slavery had led him to conceive and to avow the hope that he should live to redress the wrongs of the Negro race. The direction of public opinion towards the accomplishment of great political objects is one of those social acts which, during the last half century, has almost assumed the character of a new invention. But the contrast between the magnitude of the design, and the poverty of the resources at his command, might have justified many an anxious foreboding, while, during the following six years, Mr. Wilberforce concerted plans for the abolition of the slave trade with James Ramsay, the first confessor and proto-martyr of the new faith, with Ignatius Latrobe, the missionary, in his lodging in Fetter Lane, or even with Sir Charles and Lady Middleton, at their mansion in Kent. Allies of greater apparent importance were afterwards obtained; and it was when seated with Mr. Pitt, "in conversation in the open air, at the root of an old tree at Holwood, just above the steep descent into the valley of Keston," that Mr. Wilberforce resolved "to give notice, on a fit occasion, in the House of Commons, of his intention to bring the subject forward." The experience of the next twenty years was, however, to convince him that it was not from the eloquent statesman who, for nearly the whole of that period, directed the Government of this country, that effectual support must be drawn; but from the persevering energy of men who, like Ramsay and Latrobe, could touch in the bosoms of others those sacred springs of action which were working in their own. Amongst such associates in this holy war are to be mentioned, with peculiar veneration, the names of Granville Sharpe and of Thomas Clarkson.

To the former was committed the presidency of the society charged with the duty of collecting and diffusing information; while Mr. Clarkson became the zealous and indefatigable agent of that body. To Mr. Wilberforce himself was assigned the general superintendence of the cause, both in and out of Parliament.

In 1789, he first proposed the abolition of the slave trade to the House of Commons, in a speech which Burke rewarded with one of those imperishable eulogies which he alone had the skill and the authority to pronounce. But a victory over Guinea merchants was not to be numbered amongst the triumphs of eloquence. Unable to withstand the current of popular feeling which the novelty as much as the nature of the proposal had stirred, they sagaciously resolved to await the subsidence of this unwonted enthusiasm; soliciting only a suspension of the measure until Parliament should be in possession of the facts which they undertook to substantiate. To this Fabian policy, ever changing in its aspect, but uniform in its design, the slave traders were indebted for the prolongation of their guilty commerce. Nearly two years were worn away in the examination of their own witnesses; and when Mr. Wilberforce had, with difficulty, succeeded in transferring the inquiry from the bar of the House of Commons to the less dilatory tribunal of a select Committee, he had to struggle laboriously for permission to produce testimony in refutation of the evidence of his antagonists. It was not, therefore, till April, 1791, that the question was directly brought to issue; when a proof was given of the foresight with which the Guinea merchants had calculated on the gradual subsidence of the public indignation. Ominous were the forebodings with which the friends of Mr. Wilberforce looked forward to the approaching debate. By the master of St. John's College, Cambridge, his position was compared to that of "Episcopus in the infamous Synod of Dort;" while John Wesley exhorted him to proceed to the conflict as a new "*Athanasius contra mundum*." They had well divined the temper of the times. The slave traders triumphed by an overwhelming majority. In the political tumults of those days, the voice of humanity was no longer audible, and common sense had ceased to discharge its office. The bad faith and fickleness of the French Government had involved St. Domingo in confusion and bloodshed; and be-

cause the elements of society had broken loose in that colony, it was judged dangerous to arrest the accumulation of the materials of similar discord within our own! Even Mr. Pitt avowed his opinion that it was wise to await more tranquil times before the slave trade should be abolished. It was in vain that Mr. Wilberforce urged on the House of Commons, in 1792, the true inference from the calamitous state of St. Domingo. His measure for the immediate abolition of the slave trade was again defeated. Those were days in which every change was branded as a revolution—when the most sacred rules of moral or political conduct, if adduced in favour of any reform, were denounced and abhorred as “French principles.”

Reason, however, having gradually regained her dominion, the procrastinating system of the slave traders assumed a new shape, and obtained, in the person of Mr. Dundas, its most formidable advocate. With perverse ingenuity, he proposed to substitute a gradual for an immediate abolition; fixing a remote period for the entire cessation of the trade. Yet even in this cautious form the bill found a cold reception in the house of Peers, where, after consuming the session in the examination of two witnesses, their Lordships postponed the measure till the following year. With the arrival of that period, Mr. Wilberforce had to sustain three successive defeats. The House of Commons rejected first, the main proposal of an immediate abolition of the trade; then, a motion restricting the number of slaves to be annually imported into our own colonies; and, finally, a plan for prohibiting the employment of British capital in the introduction of slaves into foreign settlements. His perseverance, however, was not fruitless. A deep impression had been made by his past efforts; and, in 1794, the House of Commons, for the first time, passed a bill of immediate abolition. The defenders of the slave trade were again rescued from the impending blow by the interposition of the Peers; amongst whom a melancholy pre-eminence was thenceforth to be assigned to a member of the Royal House, who lived to redeem his early error, by assenting, in the decline of life, to the introduction of the law for the abolition of slavery.

Thus far the difficulties of the contest had chiefly arisen from the influence or the arts of his enemies; but Mr. Wilberforce had now to sustain the more depressing weight of

the secession of one of his most effective auxiliaries. Suffering under nervous debility, and influenced by other motives, of which an explanation is to be found in his "History of the Abolition of the slave trade," Mr. Clarkson was reluctantly compelled to retire from the field. With what deep regret he abandoned the contest may be learnt from his own volumes; and earnest as must have been his aspiration for its success, he was unable, during the eleven years which followed, to resume his place amidst the champions of the cause, though he lived to witness and to share in the triumph.

Providence had gifted Mr. Wilberforce with greater nervous energy; and though sustaining labours not less severe, and a public responsibility incomparably more anxious than that under which the health of his colleague had given way, he returned to the conflict with unabated resolution. In 1795, and in the following year, he again laboured in vain to induce the House of Commons to resume the ground which they had already taken; nor could his all-believing charity repress the honest indignation with which he records that a body of his supporters, sufficient to have carried the bill, had been enticed from their places in the House, by the new opera of the "Two Hunchbacks," in which a conspicuous part was assigned to the great vocalist of that day, Signior Portugallo. A rivalry more formidable even than that of the Hay-market had now arisen. Parodying his father's celebrated maxim, Mr. Pitt was engaged in conquering Europe in the West Indies; and, with the acquisition of new colonies, the slave trade acquired an increased extent, and its supporters had obtained augmented Parliamentary interest. The result was to subject Mr. Wilberforce, in the debate of 1797, to a defeat more signal than any of those which he had hitherto endured. His opponents eagerly seized this opportunity to render it irreparable. On the motion of Mr. Charles Ellis, an address to the Crown was carried, which transferred to the legislative bodies of the different colonies the task of preparing for the very measure which they had leagued together to frustrate. It was with extreme difficulty, and not without the most strenuous remonstrances, that Mr. Wilberforce dissuaded Mr. Pitt from lending his support to this extravagant project. To increase the value of his Transatlantic conquests, he had thrown open the intercourse between



our colonies and those of Spain, and had offered, in the newly acquired islands, fresh lands, on which the slave traders might effect further settlements; and though, by ceaseless importunity, Mr. Wilberforce obtained the revocation of the first of these measures, and the suspension of the second, yet the cupidity of the slave traders, and their influence in the national councils were largely increased by these new prospects of gain. Their augmented powers were attested by the ill success which attended Mr. Wilberforce's annual motions in 1798 and 1799.

The contest had now endured for twelve years. Ten successive efforts had been fruitlessly made to obtain the concurrence of the Legislature in arresting this gigantic evil. Hopeless of success by perseverance in the same tactics, and yet incapable of retiring from the duty he had assumed, Mr. Wilberforce now addressed himself to the project of effecting, by a compromise, the end which seemed unattainable by direct and open hostilities. The year 1800 was accordingly consumed in negotiations with the chief West India proprietors, of which the object was to win their concurrence in limiting the duration of the trade to a period of five or at most seven years. Delusive hopes of success cheered him for awhile, but it was ere long; apparent that the phalanx of his enemies was too firm to be penetrated. The peace of Amiens had brought to the Court of London a minister from the French Republic, who encouraged the hope that it might be possible to arrange a general convention of all the European powers for the abandonment of the traffic. Long and anxious were the endeavours made by Mr. Wilberforce for maturing this project. It is needless to say that they were unavailing. The season of 1801 was about to close, and the end in view appeared more distant than at any former time. Mr. Addington seems to have regarded the great expedition to St. Domingo as a kind of sedative, which would paralyze the resistance of the oppressed negroes throughout the West Indies; and feared to check the operation of this anodyne. The charm which these medical analogies exercised over the then occupant of the Treasury bench did not, however, extend its influence to Mr. Wilberforce. He announced his purpose to resume the Parliamentary contest in the year 1802, when the attempt was accordingly made, though under the most discouraging circumstances. The wit and



eloquence of Mr. Canning, remonstrating against the settlement of new lands in Trinidad, had been repelled by the passive resistance of the then Minister, and the time occupied in this discussion had delayed, until the dissolution of Parliament interrupted the further progress of the Abolition Act. The tumult of war in the succeeding year silenced every other sound; and the advocate of the slaves was condemned to a reluctant silence, whilst every voice was raised in reprobation of Bonaparte, and in resentment for the insult offered to Lord Whitworth. At length the auguries of success became distinct and frequent. Mr. Pitt had returned to office, the dread of Jacobinism no longer haunted the public mind, but above all, the proprietors in the Carribbean Islands had made the discovery, that by encouraging the slave trade, they were creating in the planters of the conquered colonies the most dangerous rivals in their monopoly of the British market. The union with Ireland had added a new host of friends. Not a single representative from that country withheld his assistance. Amidst all these encouragements, Mr. Wilberforce again appealed to the House of Commons, and carried the bill with overwhelming majorities. Cordial were now the congratulations of his friends of every class, from the aged John Newton, of St. Mary Woolnoth, to Jeremey Bentham, whose celebrity as the most original thinker of his age was then in its early dawn. But the Peers had not yet yielded to the influence of Christian or Moral Philosophy. "The debate," says Mr. Wilberforce's Diary, "was opened by the Chancellor in a very threatening speech, because overrating property, and full of all moral blunders. He showed himself to labour with feelings as if he was the legitimate guardian of property—Lord Stanhope's a wild speech—Lord Hawkesbury spoke honourably and handsomely.—Westmoreland like himself, coarse and bullying, but not without talent. Grenville spoke like a man of high and honourable principles, who, like a truly great statesman, regarded right and politic as identical." Blunders and bullying, however, prevailed; and the question was adjourned to the following session.

Before its arrival Lord Brougham, then travelling on the Continent as an American, and even "venturing to pass a week in the same house with several French Generals," had offered Mr. Wilberforce his assistance in pursuing

various collateral inquiries throughout Holland and Germany, and in "the great scenes of bondage (as it is called) Poland, Russia, and Hungary." To this most potent ally many others were added. Mr. Stephen and Mr. Macaulay were unremitting in the use of the pen and the press. The classical knowledge of Mr. Robert Grant was put under contribution, to illustrate the state of slavery in the ancient world; and even the daughters of Lord Muncaster were enlisted in the service of methodizing the contents of all African travels, ancient and modern. High and sanguine as were the hopes of Mr. Wilberforce, he had yet another disappointment to sustain. The House of Commons of 1805 receding from their former resolutions, rejected his bill, and drew from him in his private journals, language of distress and pain such as no former defeat had been able to extort.

The death of Mr. Pitt approached; an event which the most calm and impartial judgment must now regard as the necessary precursor of the liberation of Africa. For seventeen years since the commencement of the contest, he had guided the counsels of this country. Successful in almost every other Parliamentary conflict, and triumphing over the most formidable antagonists, he had been compelled, by the Dundases and Jenkinsons, and Roses, who on every other subject quailed under his eye, to go to the grave without obliterating that which he himself had denounced as the deepest stain on our national character, and the most enormous guilt recorded in the history of mankind. During that long period, millions of innocent victims had perished. Had he perilled his political existence on the issue, no rational man can doubt that an amount of guilt, of misery, of disgrace, and of loss, would have been spared to England and to the civilized world, such as no other man ever had it in his power to arrest.

The political antagonists of Mr. Pitt were men of a different temper; and although in the Cabinet of Mr. Fox there were not wanting those who opposed him on this subject, yet it was an opposition which, in the full tide of success, he could afford to disregard and to pardon. Had it endangered for a single session the abolition of the slave trade, these names, eminent as one at least of them was, would infallibly have been erased from the list of his Administration. Mr. Fox's Ministry had scarcely taken their places

when Lord Grenville introduced into the House of Lords, and speedily carried two bills, of which the first abolished the slave trade with all foreign powers, and the second forbade the employment in that traffic of any British shipping which had not already been engaged in it; whilst the House of Commons, resolved that the slave trade was "contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and sound policy; and that they would proceed to abolish it with all practicable expedition." Faithfully was this pledge redeemed. The death of Mr. Fox did not even delay its fulfilment. Early in 1807 that great statesman, to whom at the distance of twenty-six years it was reserved to propose the abolition of slavery itself, introduced into the House of Commons a bill which placed on the British statute-book the final condemnation of the trade in slaves. Amidst the acclamations of Parliament, the enthusiastic congratulations of his friends, and the applauses of the world, Mr. Wilberforce witnessed the success of the great object of his life with emotions, and in a spirit, which could not have found admission into a mind less pure and elevated than his own. The friendly shouts of victory which arose on every side were scarcely observed or heeded in the delightful consciousness of having rendered to mankind a service of unequalled magnitude. He retired to prostrate himself before the Giver of all good things, in profound humility and thankfulness,—wondering at the unmerited bounty of God, who had carried him through twenty years of unremitting labour, and bestowed on him a name of imperishable glory.

There are those who have disputed his title to the station thus assigned to him. Amongst the most recent is to be numbered one whose esteem is of infinitely too high value to be lightly disregarded, and whose judgment will carry with it no common authority. Mr. Sergeant Talfourd, in his life of Charles Lamb, referring to an interview which took place between Lamb and Mr. Clarkson, uses the following expressions:—"There he also met with the true annihilator of the slave trade, Thomas Clarkson, who was then enjoying a necessary respite from his stupendous labours in a cottage on the borders of Ulswater. Lamb had no taste for oratorical philanthropy, but he felt the grandeur and simplicity of Clarkson's character."

The contrast which is thus drawn between "the true annihilator of the slave trade," and the oratorical philan-

thropists who declaimed against it, does not rest merely on the authority of Mr. Talfourd. The great names of Wordsworth and Southey, with many minor writers, may be quoted in support of the same opinion. Nay, Mr. Clarkson has claimed for himself a place in the history of this great measure which affords no light countenance to the pretensions thus preferred in his behalf. In a map prefixed to his "History of the Abolition of the Slave trade," that gigantic evil is represented under the image of a mound placed at the confluence of four rivers, whose united force is bearing it away. Of these streams one takes, near its source, the name of Clarkson, into which the rivulet of Wilberforce is seen to fall much lower down. His sons reclaim against this hydrography, and propose to correct the map by converting the tributary flood into the main channel. The discussion has, we think, been inevitably forced upon them; but it is one into which we decline to enter. It may be sufficient to state what are the positions which the biographers of Mr. Wilberforce have asserted, and, as we think, substantiated. They maintain, then, that his attention had been directed to the abolition of the slave trade for some time before the subject had engaged Mr. Clarkson's notice—that he had been co-operating with Mr. Pitt for the advancement of the measure long before his acquaintance with Mr. Clarkson commenced, and for at least two years before the period at which Mr. Clarkson takes to himself the credit of having made a convert of that great Minister—that many of Mr. Clarkson's exertions were undertaken at the instance and at the expense of Mr. Wilberforce, and conducted under his written instructions,—and that from 1794 to 1805, when the victory was already won, Mr. Clarkson did not in fact participate at all in any of the labours which were unceasingly pursued by Mr. Wilberforce during the whole of that period. Thus far there seems no ground for dispute. In these volumes will be found a correspondence, the publication of which we cannot condemn, although we think that nothing but the filial duty of vindicating their father's highest title to renown could have justified his sons in giving it to the world. The effect of it is to show that Mr. Clarkson's services were remunerated by a large subscription; and that his private interests on this occasion were urged on Mr. Wilberforce with an importunity of which it would be painful to transfer



the record to these pages. Remembering the advanced age, the eminent services, and the spotless character of that venerable and excellent man, we must be permitted to express our very deep regret that the ill-judged encomiums of his friends should have contributed to the publication of any thing which could for a moment disturb the serenity of the closing scenes of a life distinguished, as we believe, by the exercise of every social and domestic virtue, and the most unwearied beneficence to men of every condition and every country.

Quitting the unwelcome contrast thus forced upon us, it is due to the memory of Mr. Wilberforce to state, that no man ever so little merited that condemnation which the language of Mr. Talfourd must be supposed to convey. He was indeed associated with those whose aid would have insured the triumph of energies incomparably inferior to his. To mention no humbler names, he was aided by the genius and philanthropy of Henry Brougham, and by the affection and self-denial and unexampled energy of his brother-in-law Mr. Stephen, and of Mr. Zachary Macaulay. It may farther be admitted, that systematic and very continuous labours were not consonant with his intellectual character or with the habits of his life. But to the office which he had undertaken, he brought qualifications still more rare, and of far higher importance. It was within the reach of ordinary talents to collect, to examine, and to digest evidence, and to prepare and distribute popular publications. But it required a mind as versatile and active, and powers as varied as were those of Mr. Wilberforce, to harmonize all minds, to quicken the zeal of some, and to repress the intemperance of others;—to negotiate with statesmen of all political parties, and, above all, to maintain for twenty successive years the lofty principles of the contest unsullied even by the seeming admixture of any lower aims. The political position assigned to him by his constituency in Yorkshire, the multitude and intimacy of his personal friendships, the animal spirits which knew no ebb, the insinuating graces of his conversation, the graceful flow of his natural eloquence, and an address at once the gayest, the most winning, and the most affectionate, marked him out as the single man of his age, to whom it would have been possible to conduct such a struggle through all its ceaseless difficulties and disappointments. These volumes

abound in proofs the most conclusive that, not merely in the House of Commons, but in every other society, he lived for this great object—that he was the centre of a vast correspondence, employing and directing innumerable agents—enlisting in his service the whole circle of his connexions, surrounded by a body of secretaries (called by Mr. Pitt his “white negroes,”) preparing or revising publications of every form, from folios of reports and evidence to newspaper paragraphs—engaged in every collateral project by which his main end could be promoted—now superintending the deliberations of the Voluntary Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade,—and then labouring from session to session in Parliamentary Committees, and occasionally passing (in opposition to his natural temper) weeks of the most laborious seclusion, to prepare himself for his more public labours. A life of more devoted diligence has scarcely been recorded of any man; unless, indeed, we are to understand all mental industry as confined to those exertions which chain the labourer to his desk.

Though Mr. Wilberforce survived the abolition of the slave trade for more than twenty-five years, he did not retain his seat in the House of Commons for much more than half of that period. The interval between the enactment of this law, and the close of his Parliamentary labours, was devoted to a ceaseless watchfulness over the interests of the African race. Our space forbids us to pursue in any detail the history of those exertions. But it is important to notice, that although declining strength compelled him to relinquish to others the chief conduct of the warfare against slavery itself, his efforts for its extinction were continued in every form, until the introduction into Parliament, of the law which declared, that from the 1st of August, 1834, “slavery should be utterly, and for ever abolished, and unlawful throughout the British colonies, possessions, and plantations abroad.” The measure had already been received with acclamation in the House of Commons, ere he was summoned to his final reward; and it was one of the subjects of the last conversation in which he ever engaged.

It would have not been compatible with the character of Mr. Wilberforce, nor a fulfilment of the mission with which he believed himself to be invested, if he had concentrated his efforts for the good of mankind on any single object,

however arduous. "God has set before me the reformation of my country's manners," is the solemn persuasion which he recorded in his twenty-seventh year, and from which, to the last hour of his life, he never swerved. During that period Great Britain underwent internal changes more important than had occurred during any two preceding centuries. Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, revenue, and population expanded with unexampled elasticity. Never before had the physical powers of nature been so largely subjugated to the physical wants of mankind, and never was the necessity more urgent for some corresponding increase of the moral powers of the conqueror. The steam-engine would have been a curse rather than a blessing, if the age which it has enriched had continued stationary in religious and intellectual improvement. Watt and Arkwright would have been but equivocal benefactors of their fellow-countrymen without the co-operation of Bell and Lancaster. England would have used like a giant the giant's strength which she was acquiring. Wealth and sensuality, hard-heartedness, on the one side, must have been brought into a fearful conflict with poverty, ignorance, and discontent, on the other. But the result has been otherwise, and these islands have become not merely the hive of productive industry, but the centre of efforts of unequalled magnitude to advance the highest interests of the human race. If in elevating the moral and religious character of our people during the last century, the first place be due to the illustrious founder of methodism, the second may be justly claimed for Mr. Wilberforce. No two men can be named who in their respective generations exercised an influence so extensive, permanent, and beneficial over public opinion. In walks of life the most dissimilar, and by means widely different, they concurred in proposing to themselves the same great end, and pursued it in the same spirit. Their views of Christian doctrine scarcely differed. They inculcated the same severe, though affectionate, morality; and were animated by the same holy principles, fervent zeal, and constitutional hilarity of temper. No one who believes that the courses of the world are guided by a supreme and benevolent intelligence, will hesitate to admit, that each of these men was appointed by Providence to execute a high and sacred trust, and prepared for its discharge by those gifts of nature and fortune

which the circumstances of their times peculiarly demanded. The career of Wesley has been celebrated by the generous enthusiasm of his disciples, and the colder, though more discriminating admiration of Southey. In these volumes is to be found a record not less impressive of the labours of Mr. Wilberforce to exalt and purify the national character. Amongst the innumerable schemes of benevolence which were projected during the last half century, there is scarcely one of the more considerable in which he does not appear to have largely participated. Now establishing schools for pupils of every age, and Christians of all denominations, and then engaged in plans for the circulation of the Scriptures, and the diffusion of Christian knowledge. The half-civilized inhabitants of the recesses of London, the prisoners in her jails, the sick and destitute in their crowded lodgings, the poor of Ireland, the heathen nations refined or barbarous, the convicts in New Holland, and the Indians on the Red River, all in their turn, or rather all at once, were occupying his mind, exhausting his purse, and engaging his time and influence for schemes for their relief or improvement. The mere enumeration of the plans in which he was immersed, and of the societies formed for their accomplishment, presents such a mass and multitude of complicated affairs, as inevitably to suggest the conclusion that no one man, nor indeed any hundred men, could conduct or understand, or remember, them all. There is, however, no miracle to explain. Living in the centre of political action, and surrounded by innumerable friends, agents, and supporters, Mr. Wilberforce was relieved from all the more toilsome duties of these countless undertakings. He may be said to have constituted himself, and to have been acknowledged, by others, as a voluntary minister of public instruction and public charities. No department in Downing street was ever administered with equal success;—none certainly by agents equally zealous, persevering, and effective. His authority was maintained by the reverence and affection of his fellow labourers, and by the wisdom of his counsels, his unfailing bounty, and his ever ready and affectionate sympathy.

No man was less liable to the imputation of withdrawing from costly personal sacrifices to promote those schemes of philanthropy which the world, or at least his own world, would admire and celebrate. During a large part of his



life, Mr. Wilberforce appears to have devoted to acts of munificence and charity, from a fourth to a third of his annual income; nor did he shrink from the humblest and most repulsive offices of kindness to the sick and the wretched with whom he was brought into contact. Yet we believe that no more genuine proof was ever given of his anxiety for the highest interests of mankind than in the publication of his "Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the Higher and Middle Classes of this Country, contrasted with real Christianity." This book appeared in 1797. The interest with which it was originally received might be readily explained by the singularity of a very conspicuous member of Parliament undertaking to handle such a theme. But there must be some deeper cause for the continued popularity of an octavo volume, of which, within half a century, fifty large editions, at the least, have been published in England and in the United States. The applauses of ecclesiastics of every class, from old John Newton to the then Bishop of London, might be yielded with liberal indulgence to so powerful and unexpected an auxiliary. But that could be no common production which moved the author of the "Pursuits of Literature" for once to quit his stilts, and to pour out a heartfelt tribute of praise in his unadulterated mother tongue; and which drew from Edmund Burke his grateful acknowledgments to the author for the comfort which he had diffused over the two last days of his eventful life.

Yet they who shall search this book for deep theology, or profound investigation, will be disappointed. "Philosophy," says Abraham Tucker, "may yet be styled the art of marshalling the ideas in the understanding, and religion that of disciplining the imagination." In the first of these arts Mr. Wilberforce did not excel; in the second he has scarcely ever been surpassed. The first three chapters of this work appear to us decidedly inferior to the rest. He is there upon a debateable land,—contrasting the inspired text with the prevalent opinions of his age on some parts of Christian doctrine. The accuracy of his own interpretations, or rather of those which are received by that part of the Church of England usually designated as Evangelical, being assumed throughout these discussions, they will scarcely convince such as read the New Testament in a different sense. But when he emerges from these defiles, and enters upon broad,



er grounds, comparing the precepts of revelation with the conventional morality of the world's favoured children, he speaks (for it is throughout a spoken rather than a written style) with a persuasive energy which breathes the very spirit of the inspired volume. Here all is the mature result of profound meditation; and his thoughts, if not always methodical and compact, are at least always poured out in language so earnest and affectionate, that philanthropy never yet assumed a more appropriate, or a more eloquent style. It is the expostulation of a brother. Unwelcome truth is delivered with scrupulous fidelity, and yet with a tenderness which demonstrates that the monitor feels the pain which he reluctantly inflicts. It is this tone of human sympathy breathing in every page which constitutes the essential charm of this book; and it is to the honour of our common nature that we are all disposed to love best that teacher, who, with the deepest compassion for our sorrows, has the least indulgence for the errors or the faults by which they have been occasioned. Whatever objections may have been raised to Mr. Wilberforce's theological opinions, there is but one which can be stated to the exegetical part of his treatise. It is, that he has erected a standard too pure and too sublime for this world's use, and proposes a scheme of Utopian perfection which is calculated, by discouraging hope, to repress exertion. The obvious answer is, that the design of every rule which can be given for the conduct of life is to afford an accurate measure of our deflection from the path of duty, and a trust-worthy guide for our return. Any system of religion or ethics which tolerated the slightest compromise with moral evil, would be so far subversive of its own purpose; although it is from the general prevalence of moral evil that such systems derive their existence and their value. To mark distinctly the departure of the luxurious, busy, care-worn, and ambitious age to which we belong, from the theory and practice of Christian morality, was the task which Mr. Wilberforce proposed to himself. Never were the sensuality, the gloom, and the selfishness which fester below the polished surface of society, brought into more vivid contrast with the faith, and hope, and charity, which in their combination form the Christian character; and never was that contrast drawn with a firmer hand, with a more tender spirit, or with a purer inspiration for the happiness of mankind.

To all these philanthropic labours were added others, addressed, though less directly, to the same ends, and undertaken and pursued in a similar spirit. In his political career, Mr. Wilberforce never ceased to act and to speak as one to whom Providence had confided the sacred trust of advancing the moral character, and promoting the welfare of the age and nation to which he belonged. As a public speaker, he enjoyed great and well-merited celebrity. But it was not in the House of Commons that his powers in this kind were exhibited to the greatest advantage. In all the deliberations of Parliament may be discerned a tacit reference to the nature of Royal citation which has brought together the two Houses "for the despatch of divers weighty and urgent affairs." The knights and burgesses are emphatically men of business, and have but little indulgence for any thing which tasks the understanding, addresses itself to the heart, or elevates the imagination;—least of all for an ostentatious display of the resources of the speaker's mind. He who can contribute a pertinent fact, or a weighty argument, need not raise his style above the region of the pathos. The aspirant for fame must excel in perspicuity of statement, in promptitude in the exposure or invention of sophistry, and in a ready though abstemious use of wit, ridicule, and sarcasm. In these requisites for success Mr. Wilberforce was deficient. He had not much Statistical knowledge, nor was he familiar with any branch of Political Economy. His argumentation was not usually perspicuous, and was seldom energetic. The habit of digression, the parenthetical structure of his periods, and the minute qualifications suggested by his reverence for truth, impeded the flow of his discourse, and frequently obscured its design. His exquisite perception of the ridiculous kept him in the exercise of habitual self-denial; and, the satire which played upon his countenance was suppressed by his universal charity, before it could form itself into language. With these disadvantages he was still a great Parliamentary speaker; and there were occasions when, borne by some sudden impulse, or carried by diligent preparation over the diffuseness which usually encumbered him, he delighted and subdued his hearers. His reputation in the House of Commons rested, however, chiefly upon other grounds. In that assembly, any one speaks with immense advantage whose character, station, or presumed knowledge is such as

to give importance to his opinions. The dogmas of some men are of incomparably more value than the logic of others; and no member except the leaders of the great contending parties, addressed the House with an authority equal to that of Mr. Wilberforce. The homage rendered to his personal character, his command over a small compact party, his representation of the county of York, the confidence of the great religious bodies in every part of England, and, above all, his independent neutrality, gave to his suffrage, an almost unexampled value. It was usually delivered with a demeanour of conscious dignity, unalloyed by the slightest tinge of arrogance, and contrasting oddly enough with the insignificance of his slight and shapeless person. Yet the spell he exercised was partly drawn from still another source. Parliamentary eloquence is essentially colloquial; and, when most embellished or sustained, is rather prolonged discourse than oratory properly so called. It was by a constant, perhaps an unavoidable observance of his tone, that Mr. Wilberforce exercised the charm which none could resist, but which many were unable to explain. His speeches in the House of Commons bore the closest resemblance to his familiar conversation. There was the same earnest sincerity of manner, the same natural and varied cadences, the same animation and ease, and the same tone of polished society; and while his affectionate, lively, and graceful talk flowed on without the slightest appearance of effort or study, criticism itself scarcely perceived, or at least excused the redundancy of his language.

But, as we have said, it was not in the House of Commons, that his powers as a public speaker had their highest exercise. His habitual trains of thought, and the feelings which he most deeply cherished, could rarely find utterance in that scene of strife and turmoil. At the hustings, where the occasion justified the use of a more didactic style, there was much simple majesty in the uncompromising avowal of his principles, and in the admonitions suggested by them. It was the grave eloquence of the pulpit applied to secular uses. But it was in the great assemblages held for religious and charitable objects that the current of his eloquence moved with the greatest impetus and volume. Here he at once felt his way to the hearts of the dense mass of eager and delighted listeners. In the fulness of the charity which believeth all things, giving credit to the

multitude for feelings as pure and benevolent as his own, he possessed the power of gracefully and decorously laying aside the reserve which habitually shrouded from the irreverent and profane the more secret and cherished feelings of his heart. Nothing was ever more singular, or less framed upon any previous model of eloquence, than were some of those addresses in which the chastened style of the House of Commons (of all assemblies the most fastidious) was employed to give utterance to thoughts which, though best becoming the deepest solitude, retained, even in these crowded scenes, their delicacy not less than their beauty. The most ardent of his expressions bore the impress of indubitable sincerity, and of calm and sober conviction; instantly distinguishing them from the less genuine enthusiasm of others who dissolved their meaning in ecstasy, and soared beyond the reach of human comprehension into the third heavens of artificial rapture. It was an example perhaps as full of danger as of interest; and not a few are the offensive imitations which have been attempted of a model which could be followed successfully, or even innocently, by none whose bosoms did not really burn with the same heavenly affections, who did not practise the same severe observance of truth, or whose taste had not been refined to the same degree of sensibility.

No part of Mr. Wilberforce's biography will be read with greater interest than that which describes his political career. Holding for forty-three years a conspicuous place in the House of Commons, the current of public affairs as it flowed past him, reflected his character in a thousand different forms; and exhibited on the most tumultuous theatre of action, the influence of those sacred principles, with the workings of which we are for the most part conversant only in more quiet and secluded scenes.

"From any one truth all truth may be inferred,"—a Baconian text, from which certain commentators of the last century concluded, that he who possessed a Bible might dispense with Grotius and with Locke; and that at the approach of the Scriptures all other writings should disappear, as they had once vanished at the presence of the Koran. The opinion which precisely reverses this doctrine is recommended by less ingenuity, and by no better logic. Mr. Wilberforce was far too wise a man to imagine that any revelation from God could be designed to



supersede the duty of patient research into all other sources of knowledge. But neither did he ever reject the vast body of ethical precepts delivered by Divine inspiration, as irrelevant to the political questions with which he was daily conversant. He invariably brought every conclusion drawn from other studies to the test of their consistency with the sacred oracles. They supplied him with an ordinate by which to measure every curve. They gave him what most public men egregiously want,—the firm hold of a body of unchanging opinions. In his case this advantage was peculiarly momentous. His neglected education, his inaptitude for severe and continuous mental labour, the strength of his sympathies, and his strong personal attachment to Mr. Pitt, all seemed to give the promise of a ductile, vacillating, uncertain course. Yet in reality no man ever pursued in Parliament a career more entirely guided by fixed principles, or more frequently at variance with his habitual inclinations. His connexions, both public and private, not less than his natural temper, disposed him to that line of policy which, in our days, assumes the title of “conservative:” yet his conduct was almost invariably such as is now distinguished by the epithets “liberal and reforming.” A Tory by predilection, he was in action a Whig. His heart was with Mr. Pitt; but on all the cardinal questions of the times, his vote was given to Mr. Fox.

This conflict of sentiment with principle did not, however, commence in the earlier days of Mr. Pitt's administration; for the mortal foe of Jacobinism entered the House of Commons, as a Parliamentary reformer; and Mr. Wilberforce executed a rapid journey from Nice to London in the winter of 1784 to support, by his eloquence and his vote, the Reform Bill which his friend introduced in the session of that year. The following broken sentences from his diary record the result: “At Pitt's all day—it goes on well—sat up late chatting with Pitt—his hopes of the country and noble patriotic heart—to town—Pitt's—house—Parliamentary reform—terribly disappointed and beat—extremely fatigued—spoke extremely ill, but commended—called at Pitt's—met poor Wyvill.” Of this “ill-spoken but commended speech,” the following sentence is preserved: “The consequence of this measure,” he said, “will be that the freedom of opinion will be restored, and party connexions in a great measure vanish, for party on



one side begets party on the other;"—a prophecy which, rightly understood, is perceptibly advancing towards its fulfilment. The ill success of Mr. Pitt's proposal did not damp the zeal of Mr. Wilberforce. He introduced into the House of Commons, and even succeeded in carrying there two of the most important enactments of the Reform Bill, in which, at the distance of nearly half a century, Lord Grey obtained the reluctant concurrence of the Peers. One of these measures provided for a general registration of voters; the others for holding the poll, at the same time, in several different parts of the same county.

From the commencement of the war with France is to be dated the dissolution of the political alliance which had, till then, been maintained with little interruption between Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Pitt. Partaking more deeply than most men of the prevalent abhorrence of the revolutionary doctrines of that day, Mr. Wilberforce's resistance to the war was decided and persevering. A written message from Mr. Pitt, delivered on the first debate on that question, "assuring him that his speaking then might do irreparable mischief, and promising that he should have another opportunity before war should be declared," defeated his purpose of protesting publicly against the approaching hostilities. Accident prevented the redemption of the pledge, but Mr. Wilberforce's purposes remained unshaken. "Our Government," he says in a letter on this subject, "had been for some months before the breaking out of the war, negotiating with the principal European powers, for the purpose of obtaining a joint representation to France, assuring her that if she would formally engage to keep within her limits, and not molest her neighbours, she should be suffered to settle her own internal government and constitution without interference. I never was so earnest with Mr. Pitt on any other occasion as I was in my entreaties before the war broke out, that he would openly declare in the House of Commons that he had been, and then was negotiating this treaty. I urged on him that the declaration might possibly produce an immediate effect in France, where it was manifest there prevailed an opinion that we were meditating some interference with their internal affairs, and the restoration of Louis to his throne. At all events, I hoped that in the first lucid interval, France would see how little reason there was for continuing the

war with Great Britain; and, at least, the declaration must silence all but the most determined oppositionists in this country. How far this expectation would have been realized you may estimate by Mr. Fox's language when Mr. Pitt, at my instance, did make the declaration last winter (1799.) 'If,' he said, 'the Right Honourable Gentleman had made the declaration now delivered, to France, as well as to Russia, Austria, and Prussia, I should have nothing more to say or to desire.' "

Experience and reflection confirmed these original impressions. After the war had continued "for a year, Mr. Wilberforce was engaged in making up his mind cautiously and maturely, and, therefore, slowly as to the best conduct to be observed by Great Britain in the present critical emergency. With what a severe self-examination he was accustomed to conduct these inquiries, may be learnt from an entry made at that period in his private journal. "It is a proof to me of my secret ambition, that though I foresee how much I shall suffer in my feelings throughout from differing from Pitt, and how indifferent a figure I shall most likely make, yet that motives of ambition will insinuate themselves. Give me, O Lord, a true sense of the comparative value of earthly and of heavenly things; this will render me sober-minded, and fix my affections on things above."

Such was the solemn preparation with which he approached this momentous question, and moved in the session of 1794 an amendment to the address recommending a more pacific policy. The failure of that attempt did not shake his purpose; for after the interval of a few days he voted with Mr. Grey on a direct motion for the re-establishment of peace. The genuine self-denial with which this submission to a clear sense of duty was attended, Mr. Wilberforce has thus touchingly described. "No one who has not seen a good deal of public life, and felt how difficult and painful it is to differ widely from those with whom you wish to agree, can judge at what an expense of feeling such duties are performed. Wednesday, February 4, dined at Lord Camden's. Pepper, and Lady Arden, Steele, &c. I felt queer, and all day out of spirits—wrong! but hurt by the idea of Pitt's alienation—12th, party of *the old firm* at the Speaker's; I not there."

Mr. Pitt's alienation was not the only, nor the most severe penalty which Mr. Wilberforce had to pay on this occasion. The sarcasms of Windham,—the ironical compliments of Burke,—a cold reception from the King,—and even Fox's congratulation upon his approaching alliance with the opposition, might have been endured. But it was more hard to bear the rebukes, however tenderly conveyed, of his friend and early guide, the Dean of Carlisle; the reproaches of the whole body of his clerical allies for the countenance which they conceived him to have given to the enemies of religion and of order; and the earnest remonstrances of many of his most powerful supporters in Yorkshire. The temper so accessible to all kindly influences was, however, sustained by the invigorating voice of an approving conscience. He resumed his pacific proposals in the spring of 1795, and though still defeated, it was by a decreasing majority. Before the close of that year, Mr. Pitt himself had become a convert to the opinions of his friend. The war had ceased to be popular, and Lord Malmesbury's negotiation followed. The failure of that attempt at length convinced Mr. Wilberforce that the war was inevitable; and thenceforward his opposition to it ceased.

The same independent spirit raised him, on less momentous occasions, above the influence of the admiration and strong personal attachment which he never withheld from Mr. Pitt at any period of their lives. Though the Minister was "furious" on the occasion, he voted and spoke against the motion for augmenting the income of the Prince of Wales. Though fully anticipating the ridicule which was the immediate consequence of the attempt, he moved the House of Commons to interfere for the liberation of Lafayette, when confined in the gaol of Olmuky. Though, at the suggestion of Bishop Prettyman, Mr. Pitt pledged himself to introduce a bill which would have silenced every dissenting minister to whom the magistrates might have thought proper to refuse a license, Mr. Wilberforce resisted, and with eventful success, this encroachment on the principles of toleration. Though the whole belligerent policy of Mr. Pitt, on the resumption of the war, rested on continental alliances, cemented by subsidies from the British Treasury, that system found in Mr. Wilberforce the most strenuous and uncompromising opponent. On the revival

of hostilities in 1803, he supported Mr. Fox not merely with his vote, but with a speech which he subsequently published. The impeachment of Lord Melville brought him into a direct and painful hostility to those with whom he had lived in youthful intimacy, and who still retained their hold on his heart. Mr. Pitt was his chosen friend—Lord Melville his early companion. But even on this occasion, though compelled to watch the movements of the “fascinating eye” and “the agitated countenance” turned reproachfully to him from the Treasury Bench, he delivered one of the most memorable of his Parliamentary speeches,—in which the sternest principles of public morality were so touchingly combined with compassion for the errors he condemned, that the effect was irresistible; and the casting vote of the Speaker can scarcely be said with greater truth to have determined the decision of the House. Nothing more truly in the spirit of the pure and lofty principles by which he was guided is recorded of him, than his defence to the charge of inconsistency for declining to join the deputation which carried up to the King the subsequent address for the removal of Lord Melville from the Royal Councils. “I am a little surprised that it should be imputed as a fault to any that they did not accompany the procession to St. James’s. I should have thought that men’s own feelings might have suggested to them that it was a case in which the heart might be permitted to give a lesson to the judgment. My country might justly demand that, in my decision on Lord Melville’s conduct, I should be governed by the rules of justice, and the principles of the constitution, without suffering party considerations, personal friendship, or any extrinsic motive whatever to interfere; that in all that was substantial I should deem myself as in the exercise of a judicial office. But when the sentence of the law is past, is not that sufficient? Am I to join in the execution of it? Is it to be expected of me that I am to stifle the natural feelings of the heart, and not even to shed a tear over the very sentence I am pronouncing? I know not what Spartan virtue or stoical pride might require; but I know that I am taught a different, ay, and a better lesson by a greater than either Lysurgus or Zeno. Christianity enforces no such sacrifice. She requires us indeed to do justice, but to love mercy. I learnt not in her school to triumph even over a conquered enemy, and must I join the triumph over a fallen friend?”



We might, with the aid of these volumes, trace Mr. Wilberforce's political career through all the memorable controversies of his times, and prove beyond the reach of contradiction, that every vote was given under such a sense of responsibility to the Supreme Lawgiver as raised him above the influence of those human affections, which scarcely any man felt more keenly. He was supported by the acclamations of no party, for in turn he resisted all. Even the great religious bodies who acknowledged him as their leader were frequently dissatisfied with a course which, while it adorned their principles, conceded nothing to their prejudices. The errors into which he may have fallen were in no single case debased by any selfish motive, and were ever on the side of peace and of the civil and religious liberties of mankind.

But those indications of human character which it chiefly concerns us to study, are not, after all, to be discovered in places where men act together in large masses, and under strong excitement. Mr. Wilberforce's interior life is exhibited in this biography with a minuteness of self-dissection which we think hardly possible to contemplate without some degree of pain. It was his habit to note, in the most careless and elliptical language, every passing occurrence, however trivial, apparently as a mere aid to recollection. But his journals also contain the results of a most unsparing self-examination, and record the devotional feelings with which his mind was habitually possessed. They bear that impress of perfect sincerity, without which they would have been altogether worthless. The suppression of them would have disappointed the expectations of a very large body of readers; and the sacred profession of the editors gives peculiar authority to their judgment as to the advantage of such disclosures. To their filial piety the whole work, indeed almost every line of it, bears conclusive testimony. We feel, however, an invincible repugnance to the transfer into these pages of the secret communings of a close self-observer with his Maker. The Church of Rome is wise in proclaiming the sanctity of the Confessional. The morbid anatomy of the human heart (for such it must appear to every one who dares to explore its recesses) is at best a cheerless study. It would require some fortitude in any man to state how much of our mutual affection and esteem depends upon our imperfect knowledge of each



other. The same creative wisdom which shelters from every human eye the workings of our animal frame, has not less closely shrouded from observation the movements of our spiritual nature. The lowly and contrite spirit is a shrine in which he who inhabiteth eternity condescends to dwell, but where we at least are accustomed to regard every other presence as profane. There is, we think, great danger in such publications. For one man who, like Mr. Wilberforce, will honestly lay bare his conscience on paper, there are at least one hundred, living with the fear or the hope of the biographer before their eyes, who will apply themselves to the same task in a very different spirit. The desire of posthumous, or of living fame, will dictate the acknowledgment of faults, which the reader is to regard as venial, while he is to admire the sagacity with which they are dictated, and the tenderness of conscience with which they are deplored. We may be wrong; but both experience and probability seem to us to show that the publication of the religious journals of one honest man, is likely to make innumerable hypocrites.

The domestic life of Mr. Wilberforce is a delightful object of contemplation, though it cannot be reduced into the form of distinct narration. From his twenty-sixth year his biography consists rather of a description of habits than of a succession of events. No man had less to do with adventure, or was more completely independent of any such resource. The leisure which he could withdraw from the service of the public was concentrated upon his large and happy household, and on the troops of friends who thronged the hospitable mansion in which he lived in the neighbourhood of London.

The following sketch of his domestic retirement possesses a truth which will be at once recognised by every one who was accustomed to associate with him in such scenes:—

“Who that ever joined him in his hour of daily exercise cannot see him now as he walked round his garden at Highwood, now in animated and even playful conversation, and then drawing from his copious pockets (to contain Dalrymple’s State Papers was their standard measure) a Psalter, a Horace, a Shakspeare, or Cowper, and reading or reciting chosen passages, and then catching at long

stored flower leaves as the wind blew them from the pages, or standing by a favourite gumcistus to repair the loss. Then he would point out the harmony of the tints, the beauty of the pencilling and the perfection of the colouring, and sum up all into those ascriptions of praise to the Almighty which were ever welling from his grateful heart. He loved flowers with all the simple delight of childhood. He would hover from bed to bed over his favourites, and when he came in, even from his shortest walk, he deposited a few that he had gathered safely in his room before he joined the breakfast table. Often he would say as he enjoyed their fragrance, ‘How good is God to us. What should we think of a friend who had furnished us with a magnificent house and all we needed, and then coming in to see that all had been provided according to his wishes, should be hurt to find that no scents had been placed in the rooms? Yet so has God dealt with us—lovely flowers are the smiles of his goodness.’”

The following letter to one of his children exhibits Mr. Wilberforce in one of those characters in which he excelled most men:—

“Battersea Rise, Sept. 14, 1814.

“My very dear —.

“I do not relish the idea that you are the only one of my children who has not written to me during my absence, and that you should be the only one to whom I should not write. I therefore take up my pen, though but for a few moments, to assure you that I do not suspect your silence to have arisen from the want of affection for me, any more than that which I myself have hitherto observed has proceeded from this source. There is a certain demon called procrastination, who inhabits a castle in the air at Sandgate, as well as at so many other places, and I suspect that you have been carried up some day (at the tail of your kite perhaps,) and lodged in that same habitation, which has fine large rooms in it from which there are beautiful prospects in all directions; and probably you will not quit a dwelling-place that you like so well, till you hear that I am on my way to Sandgate. You will meet the to-morrow man there (it just occurs to me,) and I hope you will have prevailed on him to tell you the remainder of that pleasant story, a part of which Miss Edgeworth has related, though I greatly fear he would still partake so far of the

spirit of the place as to leave a part untold, till—to-morrow. But I am trifling sadly, since I am this morning unusually pressed for time, I will therefore only guard my dear boy seriously against procrastination, one of the most dangerous assailants of usefulness, and assure him that I am to-day, to-morrow, and always while I exist, his affectionate Father.

W. WILBERFORCE."

Mr. Wilberforce excelled in the arts of hospitality, and delighted in the practice of them. His cordial welcome taught the most casual guest to feel that he was at home; and the mass of his friends and acquaintance could scarcely suppose that there was a domestic sanctuary still more sacred and privileged than that into which they were admitted. Amongst them are not a few obscure, with some illustrious names; and of the latter Mr. Pitt is by far the most conspicuous.

There is no one filling so large a space in recent history as Mr. Pitt, with whose private habits the world is so little acquainted. These volumes do not contribute much to dispel the obscurity. We find him indeed at one time passing an evening in classical studies or amusements with Mr. Canning; and at another, cutting walks through his plantations at Holwood, with the aid of Mr. Wilberforce and Lord Grenville. But on the whole, the William Pitt of this work is the austere Minister with whom we were already acquainted, and not the man himself in his natural or in his emancipated state.

The following extract of a letter from Mr. Wilberforce is almost the only passage which gives us an intimation of the careless familiarity in which for many years they lived together:—

"And now after having transacted my business with the Minister, a word or two to the man—a character in which, if it is more pleasant to you, it is no less pleasant to me to address you. I wish you may be passing your time half as salubriously and comfortably as I am at Gisborne's, where I am breathing good air, eating good mutton, keeping good hours, and enjoying the company of good friends. You have only two of the four at command, nor these always in so pure a state as in Needwood Forest; your town mutton being apt to be woolly, and your town friends to be interested: however, I sincerely believe you are, through the goodness of Providence, better off in the latter particu-

lar, than has been the fate of ninety-nine Ministers out of a hundred; and as for the former, the quantity you lay in may in some degree atone for the quality; and it is a sign that neither in friends nor mutton you have yet lost your taste. Indeed, I shall reckon it a bad symptom of your moral or corporal state, as the case may be, when your palate is so vitiated, that you cannot distinguish the true from the false flavour. All this is sad stuff, but you must allow us gentlemen who live in forests to be a little figurative. I will only add, however, (that I may not quite exhaust your patience,) that I hope you will never cease to relish me, and do me the justice to believe the ingredients are good, though you may not altogether approve of the cooking. Yours ever, W. WILBERFORCE."

"P. S. Remember me to all friends. I hope you have no more gout, &c. If you will at any time give me a line (though it be but a mouthful,) I shall be glad of it. You will think me be-Burked like yourself."

On the occasion of Mr. Pitt's duel with Mr. Tierney, Mr. Wilberforce had designed to bring the subject under the notice of the House of Commons. The intention was defeated by the following kind and characteristic letter:—

"My dear Wilberforce:—

"I am not the person to argue with you on a subject in which I am a good deal concerned. I hope too that I am incapable of doubting your kindness to me (however mistaken I may think it,) if you let any sentiment of that sort actuate you on the present occasion. I must suppose that some such feeling has inadvertently operated upon you, because whatever may be your general sentiments on subjects of this nature, they can have acquired no new tone or additional argument from any thing that has passed in this transaction. You must be supposed to bring this forward in reference to the individual case.

"In doing so, you will be accessary in loading one of the parties with unfair and unmerited obloquy. With respect to the other party, myself, I feel it a real duty to say to you frankly that your motion is one for my removal. If any step on the subject is proposed in Parliament and agreed to, I shall feel from that moment that I can be of no more use out of office than in it; for in it according to the feelings I entertain, I could be of none. I state to you,

as I think I ought, distinctly and explicitly what I feel. I hope I need not repeat what I always feel personally to yourself.—Your's ever,  
 WILLIAM PITT."  
 "Downing Street, Wednesday, May 30, 1798, 11 P. M."

The following passage is worth transcribing as a graphic, though slight sketch of Mr. Pitt, from the pen of one who knew him so well:—

"When a statement had been made to the House of the cruel practices approaching certainly to torture, by which the discovery of concealed arms had been enforced in Ireland, John Claudius Beresford rose to reply, and said with a force and honesty, the impression of which I never can forget, 'I fear, and feel deep shame in making the avowal—I fear it is too true—I defend it not—but I trust I may be permitted to refer, as some palliation of these atrocities, to the state of my unhappy country, where rebellion and its attendant horrors had roused on both sides to the highest pitch all the strongest passions of our nature.' I was with Pitt in the House of Lords when Lord Clare replied to a similar charge—'Well, suppose it were so; but surely,' &c. I shall never forget Pitt's look. He turned round to me with that indignant stare which sometimes marked his countenance, and stalked out of the House."

It is not generally known that at the period of Lord Melville's trial a coolness almost approaching to estrangement had arisen between that minister and Mr. Pitt. The following extract from one of Mr. Wilberforce's Diaries on this subject affords an authentic and curious illustration of Mr. Pitt's character:—

"I had perceived above a year before that Lord Melville had not the power over Pitt's mind, which he once possessed. Pitt was taking me to Lord Camden's, and in our *tete-à-tete* he gave me an account of the negotiations which had been on foot to induce him to enter Addington's Administration. When they quitted office in 1801, Dundas proposed taking as his motto, *Jam rude donatus*. Pitt suggested to him that having always been an active man, he would probably wish again to come into office, and then that his having taken such a motto would be made a ground for ridicule. Dundas assented, and took another motto. Addington had not long been in office, before Pitt's expre-



tation was fulfilled, and Dundas undertook to bring Pitt into the plan; which was to appoint some third person head, and bring in Pitt and Addington on equal terms under him. Dundas, accordingly, confiding in his knowledge of all Pitt's ways and feelings, set out for Walmer Castle; and after dinner, and port wine, began cautiously to open his proposals. But he saw it would not do, and stopped abruptly. 'Really,' said Pitt with a sly severity, and it was almost the only sharp thing I ever heard him say of any friend, 'I had not the curiosity to ask what I was to be.'"

Amongst the letters addressed to Mr. Wilberforce, to be found in these volumes, is one written by John Wesley from his death-bed, on the day before he sank into the lethargy from which he was never roused. They are probably the last written words of that extraordinary man.

"My dear Sir,

"February 24, 1791.

"Unless Divine power has raised you up to be as *Athanasius contra mundum*, I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise, in opposing that execrable villainy which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils; and if God be for you, who can be against you? Are all of them together stronger than God? Oh! be not weary of well-doing. Go on in the name of God, and in the power of his might, till even American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun, shall vanish away before it. That He who has guided you from your youth up, may continue to strengthen you in this and all things, is the prayer of, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

JOHN WESLEY."

From a very different correspondent, Jeremy Bentham, Mr. Wilberforce received two notes, for which, as they are the only examples we have seen in print of his epistolary style, we must find a place.

"Kind Sir,

"The next time you happen on Mr. Attorney-General in the House or elsewhere, be pleased to take a spike—the longer and sharper the better—and apply it to him by way of *memento*, that the Penitentiary Contract Bill has, for I know not what length of time, been sticking in his

hands; and you will much oblige your humble servant to command,

JEREMY BENTHAM."

"N. B. A corking-pin was, yesterday, applied by Mr. Abbot."

"I sympathize with your now happily promising exertions in behalf of the race of innocents, whose lot it has hitherto been to be made the subject-matter of depredation, for the purpose of being treated worse than the authors of such crimes are treated for those crimes in other places."

There are, in this work, some occasional additions to the stock of political anecdotes. Of these we transcribe the following specimens:—

"Franklin signed the peace of Paris in his old spotted velvet coat (it being the time of a court-mourning, which rendered it more particular.) 'What,' said my friend the negotiator, 'is the meaning of that harlequin coat?' 'It is that in which he was abused by Wedderburne.' He showed much rancour and personal enmity to this country—would not grant the common passports for trade, which were, however, easily got from Jay or Adams.

"Dined with Lord Camden; he, very chatty and pleasant. Abused Thurlow for his duplicity and mystery. Said the King had said to him occasionally he had wished Thurlow and Pitt to agree; for that both were necessary to him—one in the Lords, the other in the Commons. Thurlow will never do any thing to oblige Lord Camden, because he is a friend of Pitt's. Lord Camden himself, though he speaks of Pitt with evident affection, seems rather to complain of his being too much under the influence of any one who is about him; particularly of Dundas, who prefers his countrymen whenever he can.—Lord Camden is sure that Lord Bute got money by the peace of Paris. He can account for his sinking near £300,000 in land and houses; and his paternal estate in the island which bears his name was not above £1500 a-year, and he is a life-tenant only of Wortley, which may be £8000 or £10,000. Lord Camden does not believe Lord Bute has any the least connexion with the King now, whatever he may have had. Lord Thurlow is giving constant dinners to the Judges, to gain them over to his party. \* \* \* \* was applied to by \* \* \* \*, a wretched sort of dependant of the Prince of Wales, to know if he would lend him money on the joint bond of the Prince and the dukes of York and Clarence, to receive

double the sum lent, whenever the King should die, and either the Prince of Wales, the Dukes of York and Clarence, come into the inheritance. The sum intended to be raised is £200,000.

“’Tis only a hollow truce, not a peace, that is made between Thurlow and Pitt. They can have no confidence in each other.”

It is perhaps the most impressive circumstance in Mr. Wilberforce’s character, that the lively interest with which he engaged in all these political occurrences was combined with a consciousness not less habitual or intense of their inherent vanity. There is a seeming paradox in the solicitude with which he devoted so much of his life to secular pursuits, and the very light esteem in which he held them. The solution of the enigma is to be found in his unremitting habits of devotion. No man could more scrupulously obey the precept which Mr. Taylor has given to his “statesman” —To observe a “Sabbatical day in every week, and a Sabbatical hour in every day.” Those days and hours gave him back to the world, not merely with recruited energy, but in a frame of mind the most favourable to the right discharge of its duties. Things in themselves the most trivial, wearisome, or even offensive, had, in his solitude, assumed a solemn interest from their connexion with the future destinies of mankind, whilliant and alluring objects of human ambition had been brought into a humiliating contrast with the great ends for which life is given, and with the immortal hopes by which it should be sustained. Nothing can be more heartfelt than the delight with which he breathed the pure air of these devotional retirements. Nothing more soothing than the tranquillity which they diffused over a mind harassed with the vexations of a political life.

Mr. Wilberforce retired from Parliament in the year 1825. The remainder of his life was passed in the bosom of his family. He did not entirely escape those sorrows which so usually thicken as the shadows grow long, for he survived both his daughters; and, from that want of worldly wisdom which always characterized him, he lost a very considerable part of his fortune in speculations in which he had nothing but the gratification of parental kindness to gain or to hope. But never were such reverses more effectually baffled by the invulnerable peace of a cheerful and self-approving heart. There were not wanting external

circumstances which marked the change; but the most close and intimate observer could never perceive on his countenance even a passing shade of dejection or anxiety on that account. He might, indeed, have been supposed to be unconscious that he had lost any thing, had not his altered fortunes occasionally suggested to him remarks on the Divine goodness, by which the seeming calamity had been converted into a blessing to his children and to himself. It afforded him a welcome apology for withdrawing from society at large, to gladden, by his almost constant presence, the homes of his sons by whom his life has been recorded. There, surrounded by his children and his grandchildren, he yielded himself to the current of each successive inclination; for he had now acquired that rare maturity of the moral stature in which the conflict between inclination and duty is over, and virtue and self-indulgence are the same. Some decline of his intellectual powers was perceptible to the friends of his earlier and more active days; but

"To things immortal time can do no wrong,  
And that which never is to die, for ever must be young."

Looking back with gratitude, sometimes eloquent, but more often from the depth of the emotion faltering on the tongue, to his long career of usefulness, of honour, and enjoyment, he watched with grave serenity the ebb of the current which was fast bearing him to his eternal reward. He died in his seventy-fifth year, in undisturbed tranquillity, after a very brief illness, and without any indication of bodily suffering. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, in the presence of a large number of the members of both Houses of Parliament; nor was the solemn ritual of the church ever pronounced over the grave of any of her children with more affecting or more appropriate truth. Never was recited, on a more fit occasion, the sublime benediction—"I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

The volumes to which we have been chiefly indebted for this very rapid epitome of some of the events of Mr. Wilberforce's life, will have to undergo a severe ordeal. There are numberless persons who assert a kind of property in his reputation, and who will resent as almost a personal wrong any exhibition of his character which may



fall short of their demands. We believe, however, though not esteeming ourselves the best possible judges, that even this powerful party will be satisfied. They will find in this portraiture of their great leader much to fulfil their expectations. Impartial judges will, we think, award to the book the praise of fidelity, and diligence, and unaffected modesty. Studiously withdrawing themselves from the notice of their readers, the biographers of Mr. Wilberforce have not sought occasion to display the fruits of their theological or literary studies. Their taste has been executed with ability, and with deep affection. No one can read such a narrative without interest, and many will peruse it with enthusiasm. It contains several extracts from Mr. Wilberforce's speeches and throws much occasional light on the political history of England during the last half century. It brings us into acquaintance with a circle in which were projected and matured many of the great schemes of benevolence by which our age has been distinguished, and shows how partial is the distribution of renown in the world in which we are living. A more equal dispensation of justice would have awarded a far more conspicuous place amongst the benefactors of mankind to the names of Mr. Stephen and Mr. Macaulay, than has ever yet been assigned to them.

Biography, considered as an art, has been destroyed by the greatest of all biographers, James Boswell. His success must be forgotten before Plutarch or Isaac Walton will find either rivals or imitators. Yet memoirs, into which every thing illustrative of the character or fortunes of the person to be described is drawn, can never take a permanent place in literature, unless the hero be himself as picturesque as Johnson, nor unless the writer be gifted with the dramatic powers of Boswell. Mr. Wilberforce was an admirable subject for graphic sketches in this style; but the hand of a son could not have drawn them without impropriety, and they have never been delineated by others. A tradition, already fading, alone preserves the memory of those social powers which worked as a spell on every one who approached him, and drew from Madame de Staël the declaration that he was the most eloquent and the wittiest converser she had met in England. But the memory of his influence in the councils of the state, of his holy character, and of his services to mankind, rests upon an imperishable basis, and will descend with honour to the latest times.

## THE LIVES OF WHITFIELD AND FROUDE.\*

(Edinburgh Review, 1838.)

IF the enemies of Christianity in the commencement of the last century failed to accomplish its overthrow, they were at least successful in producing what at present appears to have been a strange and unreasonable panic. Middleton, Bolingbroke, and Mandeville, have now lost their terrors; and (in common with the heroes of the Dunciad) Chubb, Toland, Collins, and Woolston, are remembered only on account of the brilliancy of the *Auto-da-fé* at which they suffered. To these writers, however, belongs the credit of having suggested to Clarke his inquiries into the elementary truth on which all religion depends; and by them Warburton was provoked to "demonstrate" the Divine legation of Moses. They excited Newton to explore the fulfilment of Prophecy, and Lardner to accumulate the proofs of the Credibility of the Gospels. A greater than any of these, Joseph Butler, was induced, by the same adversaries, to investigate the analogy of natural and revealed religion, and Berkeley and Sherlock, with a long catalogue of more obscure names, crowded to the rescue of the menaced citadel of the Faith. But in this anxiety to strengthen its defences, the garrison not only declined to attempt new conquests, but withdrew from much of their ancient dominion. In this its apologetic age, English Theology was distinguished by an unwonted timidity and coldness. The alliance which it had maintained from the days of Jewel to those of Leighton, with philosophy and eloquence, with wit and poetry, was dissolved. Taylor and Hall, Donne and Hooker, Baxter and Howe, had spoken as men having

\* The Life and Times of the Rev. George Whitfield, M. A. By ROBERT PHILIP. 8vo. London, 1838.

Remains of the Rev. Richard Hurrell Froude, M. A. Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1838.

authority, and with an unclouded faith in their Divine Mission. In that confidence they had grappled with every difficulty, and had wielded with equal energy and ease all the resources of genius and of learning. Alternately searching the depths of the heart, and playing over the mere surface of the mind, they relieved the subtleties of logic by a quibble or a pun, and illuminated, by intense flashes of wit, the metaphysical abysses which it was their delight to tread. Even when directing the spiritual affections to their highest exercise, they hazarded any quaint conceit which crossed their path, and yielded to every impulse of fancy or of passion. But Divinity was no longer to retain the foremost place in English literature. The Tillotsons and Seckers of a later age were alike distrustful of their readers and of themselves. Tame, cautious, and correct, they rose above the Tatlers and Spectators of their times, because on such themes it was impossible to be frivolous; but they can be hardly said to have contributed as largely as Steele and Addison to guide the opinions, or to form the character of their generation.

This depression of theology was aided by the state of political parties under the two first princes of the House of Brunswick. Low and High Church were but other names for Whigs and Tories; and while Hoadley and Atterbury wrangled about the principles of the Revolution, the sacred subjects which formed the pretext of their disputes were desecrated in the feelings of the multitude, who witnessed and enjoyed the controversy. Secure from farther persecution, and deeply attached to the new order of things, the Dissenters were no longer roused to religious zeal by invidious secular distinctions; and Doddington and Watts lamented the decline of their congregations from the standard of their ancient piety. The former victims of bigotry had become its proselytes, and anathemas were directed against the Pope and the Pretender, with still greater acrimony than against the Evil One, with whom good Protestants of all denominations associated them.

The theology of any age at once ascertains and regulates its moral stature; and, at the period of which we speak, the austere virtues of the Puritans, and the more meek and social, though not less devout spirit of the Worthies of the Church of England, if still to be detected in the recesses of private life, were discountenanced by the general habits

of society. The departure of the more pure and generous influences of earlier times may be traced no where more clearly than in those works of fiction, in which the prevailing profligacy of manners was illustrated by Fielding, Sterne, and Smollet; and proved, though with more honest purposes, by Richardson and Defoe.

It was at this period that the *Alma Mater* of Laud and Sacheverel was nourishing in her bosom a little band of pupils destined to accomplish a momentous revolution in the national character. Wesley had already attained the dawn of manhood when, in 1714, his future rival and coadjutor, George Whitfield, was born at a tavern in Gloucester, of which his father was the host. The death of the elder Whitfield within two years from that time, left the child to the care of his mother, who took upon herself the management of the "Bell Inn;" though as her son has gratefully recorded, she "prudently kept him, in his tender years, from intermeddling with the tavern business." In such a situation he almost inevitably fell into vices and follies, which have been exaggerated as much by the vehemence of his own confessions, as by the malignity of his enemies. They exhibit some curious indications of his future character. He robbed his mother, but part of the money was given to the poor. He stole books, but they were books of devotion. Irritated by the unlucky tricks of his playfellows, who, he says, in the language of David, "compassed him about like bees," he converted into a prayer the prophetic imprecation of the Psalmist—"In the name of the Lord I will destroy them." The mind in which devotional feelings and bad passions were thus strongly knit together, was consigned in early youth, to the culture of the master of the grammar-school of St. Mary de Crypt, in his native city; and there were given the first auspices of his future eminence. He studied the English dramatic writers, and represented their female characters with applause; and when the mayor and aldermen were to be harangued by one of the scholars, the embryo field-preacher was selected to extol the merits, and to gratify the taste of their worships. His erratic propensities were developed almost as soon as his powers of elocution. Wearied with the studies of the grammar-school, he extorted his mother's reluctant consent to return to the tavern; and there, he says, "I put on my blue apron and my snuffers, washed mops,



cleaned rooms, and, in one word, became professed and common Drawer for nigh a year and a half." The tapster was, of course, occasionally tipsy, and always in request; but as even the flow of the tap may not be perennial, he found leisure to compose sermons, and stole from the night some hours for the study of the Bible.

At the Bell Inn there dwelt a sister-in-law of Whitfield's, with whom it was his fortune or his fault to quarrel; and to sooth his troubled spirit he "would retire and weep before the Lord, as Hagar when flying from Sarah." From the presence of this Sarah he accordingly fled to Bristol, and betook himself to the study of Thomas à Kempis; but returning once more to Gloucester, exchanged Divinity for the drama, and then abandoned the dramatists for his long neglected school-books. For now had opened a prospect inviting him to the worthy use of those talents which might otherwise have been consumed in sordid occupations, or in some obscure and fruitless efforts to assert his native superiority to other men. Intelligence had reached his mother that admission might be obtained at Pembroke College, Oxford, for her capricious and thoughtful boy; and the intuitive wisdom of a mother's love assured her that through this avenue he might advance to distinction, if not to fortune. A few more oscillations between dissolute tastes and heavenward desires, and the youth finally gained the mastery over his lower appetites. From his seventeenth year to his dying day he lived amongst imbittered enemies and jealous friends, without a stain on his reputation.

In 1731 the gates of Pembroke College had finally closed on the rude figure of one of her illustrious sons, expelled by poverty to seek a precarious subsistence, and to earn a lasting reputation in the obscure alleys of London. In the following year they were opened to a pupil as ill provided with this world's wealth as Samuel Johnson, but destined to achieve a still more extensive and a more enduring celebrity. The waiter at the Bell Inn had become a servitor at Oxford—no great advancement in the social scale according to the habits of that age—yet a change which conferred the means of elevation on a mind too ardent to leave them unimproved. He became the associate of Charles, and the disciple of John Wesley, who had at that time taken as their spiritual guide the celebrated mystic, William Law. These future chiefs of a religious revolution were

then "interrogating themselves whether they had been simple and recollected; whether they had prayed with fervour Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and on Saturday noon; if they had used a collect at nine, twelve and three o'clock; duly meditated on Sunday from three to four on Thomas à Kempis, or mused on Wednesday and Friday from twelve to one on the Passion." But Quietism, indigenous in the East, is an exotic in this cold and busy land of ours, bearing at the best but sorry fruit, and hastening to a premature decay. Never was mortal man less fitted for the contemplative state than George Whitfield. It was an attempt as hopeless as that of converting a balloon into an observatory. He dressed the character indeed to admiration, for "he thought it unbecoming a penitent to have his hair powdered, and wore woollen gloves, a patched gown, and dirty shoes." But the sublime abstractions which should people the cell and haunt the spirit of the hermit he wooed in vain. In the hopeless attempt to do nothing but meditate, "the power of meditating or even of thinking was," he says, "taken from him." Castanza on the "Spiritual Combat" advised him to talk but little; and "Satan said he must not talk at all." The Divine Redeemer had been surrounded in his temptations by deserts and wild beasts, and to approach this example as closely as the localities allowed, Whitfield was accustomed to select Christ Church Meadow as the scene, and a stormy night as the time of his mental conflicts. He prostrated his body on the bare earth, fasted during Lent, and exposed himself to the cold till his hands began to blacken, and "by abstinence and inward struggles so emaciated his body as to be scarcely able to creep up stairs." In this deplorable state he received from the Wesleys books and ghostly counsels. His tutor, more wisely, sent him a physician, and for seven weeks he laboured under a severe illness. It was, in his own language, "a glorious visitation." It gave him time and composure to make a written record and a penitent confession of his youthful sins--to examine the New Testament; to read Bishop Hall's Contemplations; and to seek by prayer for wisdom and for peace. The blessings thus invoked were not denied. "The day-star," he says, "arose in my heart. The spirit of mourning was taken from me. For some time I could not avoid singing Psalms wherever I was, but my joy became gradually more settled. Thus were the days of my mourning ended."

And thus also was ended his education.—Before the completion of his twenty-first year, Whitfield returned to Gloucester; and such was the fame of his piety and talents, that Dr. Benson, the then Bishop of the Diocess, offered to dispense, in his favour, with the rule which forbade the ordination of Deacons at so unripe an age. The mental agitation which preceded his acceptance of this proposal, is described in these strange but graphic terms in one of his latest sermons.

“I never prayed against any corruption I had in my life, so much as I did against going into holy orders so soon as my friends were for having me go. Bishop Benson was pleased to honour me with peculiar friendship, so as to offer me preferment, or to do any thing for me. My friends wanted me to mount the Church betimes. They wanted me to knock my head against the pulpit too young, but how some young men stand up here and there and preach I do not know. However it be to them, God knows how deep a concern entering into the ministry and preaching was to me. I have prayed a thousand times, till the sweat has dropped from my face like rain, that God of his infinite mercy would not let me enter the church till he called me to and thrust me forth in his work. I remember once in Gloucester, I know the room; I look up to the window when I am there, and walk along the street. I know the window upon which I have laid prostrate. I said, Lord, I cannot go, I shall be puffed up with pride, and fall into the condemnation of the Devil. Lord, do not let me go yet. I pleaded to be at Oxford two or three years more. I intended to make one hundred and fifty sermons, and thought that I would set up with a good stock in trade. I remember praying, wrestling, and striving with God. I said, I am undone. I am unfit to preach in thy great name. Send me not, Lord—send me not yet. I wrote to all my friends in town and country to pray against the Bishop’s solicitation, but they insisted I should go into orders before I was twenty-two. After all their solicitations, these words came into my mind, ‘Nothing shall pluck you out of my hands;’ they came warm to my heart. Then, and not till then, I said, ‘Lord, I *will* go; send me when thou wilt.’ He was ordained accordingly; and ‘when the Bishop laid his hands upon my head, my heart,’ he says, ‘was melted down, and I offered up my whole spirit, soul, and body.’”

A man within whose bosom resides an oracle directing his steps in the language and with the authority of inspiration, had needs be thus self-devoted in soul and body to some honest purpose, if he would not mistake the voice of the Pythoness for that which issues from the sanctuary. But the uprightness and inflexible constancy of Whitfield's character rendered even its superstitions comparatively harmless; and the sortilege was ever in favour of some new effort to accomplish the single object for which he henceforward lived. The next words which "came to his soul with power" were, "Speak out, Paul," and never was injunction more strictly obeyed.

"Immediately," he says, "my heart was enlarged, and I preached on the Sunday morning to a very crowded audience with as much freedom as if I had been a preacher for some years. As I proceeded I perceived the fire kindled, till at last, though so young, and amidst a crowd of those who knew me in my infant childish days, I trust I was enabled to speak with some degree of gospel authority. Some few mocked, but most for the present seemed struck, and I have heard since that a complaint had been made to the Bishop that I drove fifteen mad by my first sermon. The worthy Prelate, as I am informed, wished that the madness might not be forgotten before next Sunday."

Thus early apprized of the secret of his strength, his profound aspirations for the growth of Christianity, the delight of exercising his rare powers, and the popular admiration which rewarded them, operating with combined and ceaseless force on a mind impatient of repose, urged him into exertions which, if not attested by irrefragable proofs, might appear incredible and fabulous. It was the statement of one who knew him well, and who was incapable of wilful exaggeration—and it is confirmed by his letters, journals, and a whole cloud of witnesses—that "in the compass of a single week, and that for years, he spoke in general forty hours, and in very many sixty, and that to thousands; and after his labours, instead of taking any rest, he was engaged in offering up prayers and intercessions, with hymns and spiritual songs, as his manner was, in every house to which he was invited."

Given, a preacher, who during the passage of the sun through the ecliptic, addresses his audience every seventh day, in two discourses of the dwarfish size to which ser-



mons attain in this degenerate age, and multiply his efforts by forty, and you do not reach the standard by which, for thirty-five successive years, Whitfield regulated this single branch of his exertions. Combine this with the fervour with which he habitually spoke, the want of all aids to the voice in the fields and the thoroughfares he frequented, and the toil of becoming distinctly audible to thousands and tens of thousands; and, considered merely as a physical phenomenon, the result is amongst the most curious of all well authenticated marvels. If the time spent in travelling from place to place, and some brief intervals of repose be subtracted, his whole life may be said to have been consumed in the delivery of one continuous or scarcely interrupted sermon. Strange as is such an example of bodily and mental energy, still stranger is the power he possessed of fascinating the attention of hearers of every rank of life and of every variety of understanding. Not only were the loom, the forge, the plough, the collieries, and the workshops, deserted at his approach, but the spell was acknowledged by Hume and Franklin—by Pulteney, Bolingbroke, and Chesterfield—by maids of honour and lords of the bed-chamber. Such indeed was its force, that when the scandal could be concealed behind a well adjusted curtain, “e’en mitred ‘auditors’ would nod the head.” Neither English reserve, nor the theological discrimination of the Scotch, nor the callous nerves of the Slave-dealers of America, nor the stately self-possession of her aborigines, could resist the enchantment. Never was mortal man gifted with such an incapacity of fatiguing or of being fatigued.

No similar praise could be honestly awarded to Whitfield’s present biographer. He has followed the steps of the great itinerant from the cradle to the grave, in a volume of nearly six hundred closely printed pages, compiled on the principle that nothing can be superfluous in the narrative of a man’s life which was of any real importance to the man himself, or to his associates. The chronicle so drawn up, illuminated by no gleams of philosophy, human or divine, and arranged on no intelligible method, is a sore exercise for the memory and the patience of the reader. It records, without selection or forbearance, thirteen successive voyages across the Atlantic—pilgrimages incalculable to every part of this island, and of the North American continent, from Georgia to Boston—controversies with Wesley

on predestination and perfection, and with the Bishops on still deeper mysteries—Chapel buildings and subscriptions—preachings and the excitement which followed them—and characteristic sayings and uncharacteristic letters, meetings and partings, and every other incident, great and small, which has been preserved by the oral or written traditions of Whitfield's followers. His life still remains to be written by some one who shall bring to the task other qualifications than an honest zeal for his fame, and a cordial adoption of his opinions.

From the conflict with the enemies who had threatened her existence, the church militant turned to resist the unwelcome ally who now menaced her repose. Warburton led the van, and behind him many a mitred front scowled on the audacious innovator. Divested of the logomachies which chiefly engaged the attention of the disputants, the controversy between Whitfield and the Bishops lay in a narrow compass. It being mutually conceded that the virtues of the Christian life can result only from certain divine impulses, and that to lay a claim to this holy inspiration when its legitimate fruits are wanting, is a fatal delusion; he maintained, and they denied, that the person who is the subject of this sacred influence has within his own bosom an independent attestation of its reality. So abstruse a debate required the zest of some more pungent ingredients; and the polemics with whom Whitfield had to do, were not such sciolists in their calling as to be ignorant of the necessity of rivetting upon him some epithet at once opprobrious and vague. While, therefore, milder spirits arraigned him as an enthusiast, Warburton, with constitutional energy of invective, denounced him as a fanatic. In vain he demanded a definition of these reproachful terms. To have fixed their meaning would have been to blunt their edge. They afforded a solution at once compendious, obscure, and repulsive, of whatever was remarkable in his character, and have accompanied his name from that time to the present.

The currents of life had drifted Warburton on divinity as his profession, but nature designed him for a satirist; and the propensity was too strong to yield even to the study of the Gospel. From them he might have discovered the injustice of his censure; for the real nature of religious fanaticism can be learnt with equal clearness from no other

source. They tell of men who compassed sea and land to make one proselyte, that when made they might train him up as a persecutor and a bigot; of others, who erected sepulchral monuments to the martyrs of a former age, while unsheathing the sword which was to augment their number; of some who would have called down fire from heaven to punish the inhospitable city which rejected their master; and of those who exhausted their bodies with fasting, and their minds with study, that they might with deeper emphasis curse the ignorant multitude. They all laboured under a mental disease, which, amongst fanatics of every generation, has assumed the same distinctive type. It consists in an unhallowed alliance of the morose and vindictive passions with devotion or religious excitement. Averting the mental vision from what is cheerful, affectionate, and animating in piety, the victims of this malady regard opposing sects, not as the children, but as the enemies of God; and while looking inward with melancholy alternations of pride and self-reproach, learn to contemplate Deity itself with but half-suppressed aversion. To connect the name of the kind hearted George Whitfield with such a reproach as this! To call on the indolent of all future generations who should believe in Warburton, to associate the despised itinerant with the Dominics, De Rances, and Bonners of former ages! Truly the indignant prelate knew not what manner of spirit he was of. If ever philanthropy burned in the human heart with a pure and intense flame, embracing the whole family of man in the spirit of universal charity, that praise is pre-eminently due to Whitfield. His predestinarian speculations perplexed his mind, but could not check the expansion of his Catholic feelings. "He loved the world that hated him." He had no preferences but in favour of the ignorant, the miserable, and the poor. In their cause he shrunk from no privation, and declined neither insult nor hostility. To such wrongs he opposed the weapons of an all-enduring meekness, and a love incapable of repulse. The springs of his benevolence were inexhaustible, and could not choose but flow. Assisted it may have been by natural disposition, and by many an external impulse; but it ultimately reposed on the fixed persuasion that he was engaged in a sacred duty, the faithful discharge of which would be followed by an imperishable recompense. With whatever undigested sub-

tleties his religious creed was encumbered, they could not hide from him, though they might obscure the truth, that, between the virtues of this life and the rewards of a future state, the connexion is necessary and indissoluble. Referring this retributive dispensation exclusively to the divine benevolence, his theology inculcated humility while it inspired hope. It taught him self-distrust, and reliance on a strength superior to his own; and instructed him in the mystery which reconciles the elevation and the purity of disinterested love with those lower motives of action which more immediately respect the future advantage of the agent. Whatever else Whitfield may have been, a fanatic, in the proper sense of that term, he assuredly was not.

The charge of enthusiasm was so ambiguous, that it might, with equal propriety, be understood as conveying either commendation or reproach. Hope is the element in which all the great men of the world move and have their being. Engaged in arduous and lofty designs, they must, to a certain extent, live in an imaginary world, and recruit their exhausted strength with ideal prospects of the success which is to repay their labours. But, like every other emotion when long indulged, hope yields but a precarious obedience to the reasoning powers; and reason herself, even when most enlightened, will not seldom make a voluntary abdication of her sovereignty in favour of her powerful minister;—surrendering up to the guidance of impulse a mind whose aims are too high to be fulfilled under her own sober counsels. For in “this little state of man” the passions must be the free subjects, not the slaves of the understanding; and while they obey her precepts, should impart to her some of their own spirit, warmth, and energy. It is, however, essential to a well constituted nature, that the subordination of the lower to the superior faculties, though occasionally relaxed, should be habitually maintained. Used with due abstinence, hope acts as a healthful tonic; intemperately indulged, as an enervating opiate. The visions of future triumph, which at first animated exertion, if dwelt upon too intently, will usurp the place of the stern reality, and noble objects will be contemplated, not for their own inherent worth, but on account of the day-dreams they engender. Thus, imagination makes one man a hero, another a somnambulist, and a third a lunatic; while it renders them all enthusiasts. And thus are classed

together, under one generic term, characters wide asunder as the poles, and standing at the top and at the bottom of the scale of human intellect; and the same epithet is used to describe Francis Bacon and Emanuel Swedenborg.

Religious men are, for obvious reasons, more subject than others to enthusiasm, both in its invigorating and in its morbid forms. They are aware that there is about their path and about their bed a real presence, which yet no sense attests. They revere a spiritual inmate of the soul, of whom they have no definite consciousness. They live in communion with one, whose nature is chiefly defined by negatives. They are engaged in duties which can be performed acceptably only at the bidding of the deepest affections. They rest their faith on prophetic and miraculous suspensions, in times past, of the usual course of nature; and derive their hopes and fears from the dim shadows cast by things eternal on the troubled mirror of this transient scene. What wonder if, under the incumbent weight of such thoughts as these, the course of active virtue be too often arrested; or if a religious romance sometimes takes the place of contemplative piety, and the fictitious gradually supersedes the real; and a world of dreams, a system of opinions, and a code of morals, which religion disavows, occasionally shed their narcotic influence over a spirit excited and oppressed by the shapeless forms and the fearful powers with which it is conversant?

Both in the more and in the less favourable sense of the expression, Whitfield was an enthusiast. The thralldom of the active to the meditative powers was indeed abhorrent from his nature; but he was unable to maintain a just equilibrium between them. His life was one protracted calenture; and the mental fever discoloured and distorted the objects of his pursuits. Without intellectual discipline or sound learning, he confounded his narrow range of elementary topics with the comprehensive scheme and science of divinity. Leaping over the state of pupillage, he became at once a teacher and a dogmatist. The lessons which he never drew from books, were never taught him by men. He allowed himself no leisure for social intercourse with his superiors, or with his equals; but underwent the debilitating effects of conversing almost exclusively with those who sat as disciples at his feet. Their homage, and the impetuous tumult of his career, left him



but superficially acquainted with himself. Unsuspicious of his own ignorance, and exposed to flattery far more intoxicating than the acclamations of the theatre, he laid the foundations of a new religious system with less of profound thought, and in a greater penury of theological research, than had ever fallen to the lot of a reformer or heresiarch before. The want of learning was concealed under the dazzling veil of popular eloquence, and supplied by the assurance of Divine illumination; and the spiritual influence on which he thus relied was little else than a continually recurring miracle. It was not a power like that which acts throughout the material world—the unseen and inaudible source of life, sustaining, cementing, and invigorating all things, hiding itself from the heedless beneath the subordinate agency it employs, and disclosed to the thoughtful by his prolific and plastic energies. The access of the Sacred presence, which Whitfield acknowledged, was perceptible by an inward consciousness, and was not merely different, but distinguishable from the movements of that intellectual and sensitive mechanism of his own nature, by means of which it operated. He discerned it not only in the growth of the active and passive virtues, and in progressive strength and wisdom and peace, but in sudden impulses which visited his bosom, and unexpected suggestions which directed his path. A truth of all others the most consolatory and the most awful, was thus degraded almost to a level with superstitions, which, in their naked form, no man would have more vehemently disclaimed; and the great mystery which blends together the human and the divine in the Christian dispensation, lost much of its sublime character, and with it much of its salutary influence.

It was indeed impossible that a mind feeding upon such visions as he invited and cherished should entirely escape their practical mischief. He would have rejected with horror the impious dream that the indwelling Deity would absolve him from any obligation of justice, mercy, or truth. Yet he could persuade himself that he enjoyed a dispensation from the duty of canonical obedience to his ecclesiastical superiors. His revolt against the authority of the Church of which he was a presbyter is at once avowed and defended by his present biographer. "If," he says, "a bishop did good or allowed good to be done, Whitfield venerated

him and his office too; but he despised both whenever they were hostile to truth or zeal—I have no objection to say, whenever they were hostile to his own sentiments and measures. What honest man would respect an unjust judge, or an ignorant physician, because of their professional titles? It is high time to put an end to this nonsense."

Mr. Philip's boast is not, or at least should not be, that he is well found in the principles of casuistry. He is no *Ductor Dubitantium*, but a spiritual pugilist, who uses his pen as a cudgel. But, whatever may be the value of hard words, they are not sufficient to adjust such a question as this. Under sanctions of the most awful solemnity, Whitfield had bound himself to submit to the lawful commands of his bishop. His "measures," being opposed to the law ecclesiastical, were interdicted by his diocesan; but, his "sentiments" telling him that he was right, and the bishop wrong, the vow of obedience was, it seems, cancelled. If so, it was but an impious mockery to make or to receive it. If it be really "nonsense" to respect so sacred an engagement, then is there less sense than has usually been supposed in good faith and plain dealing. Even on the hazardous assumption that the allegiance voluntarily assumed by the clergy of the Anglican church is dissoluble at the pleasure of the inferior party, it is at least evident that, as an honest man, Whitfield was bound to abandon the advantages when he repudiated the duties of the relation in which he stood to his bishop. But, "despising" the episcopal office, he still kept his station in the episcopal church; and, if he had no share in her emoluments, continued at least to enjoy the rank, the worship, and the influence which attend her ministers. In the midst of his revolt he performed her offices, and ministered in her temples, as often as opportunity offered. It was the dishonest proceeding of a good man bewildered by dreams of the special guidance of a Divine Monitor. The apology is the error of an honest man led astray by a sectarian spirit.

The sinister influence of Whitfield's imagination on his opinions, and through them on his conduct, may be illustrated by another example. He not only became the purchaser of slaves, but condemned the restriction which at that time forbade their introduction into Georgia. There is extant, in

his hand-writing, an inventory of the effects at the Orphan House, in that province, in which these miserable captives take their place between the cattle and the carts. "Blessed be God," he exclaimed, "for the increase of the negroes. I entirely approve of reducing the Orphan House as low as possible, and I am determined to take no more than the plantation will maintain till I can buy more negroes." It is true that it was only as founder of this asylum for destitute children that he made these purchases; and true, that in these wretched bondsmen he recognised immortal beings for whose eternal welfare he laboured; and it is also true that the morality of his age was lax on the subject. But the American Quakers were already bearing testimony against the guilt of slavery and the slave trade; and even had they been silent, so eminent a teacher of Christianity as Whitfield, could not, without censure, have so far descended from Scriptural to conventional virtue.

To measure such a man as George Whitfield by the standards of refined society might seem a very strange, if not a ludicrous attempt. Yet, as Mr. Philip repeatedly, and with emphasis, ascribes to him the character of a "gentleman," it must be stated that he was guilty of high crimes and misdemeanours against the laws of that aristocratic commonwealth in which the assertion of social equality, and the nice observance of the privileges of sex and rank, are so curiously harmonized. Such was his want of animal courage, that in the vigour of his days he could tamely acquiesce in a severe personal chastisement, and fly to the hold of his vessel for safety at the prospect of an approaching sea-fight. Such was his failure in self-respect, that a tone of awkward adulation distinguishes his letters to the ladies of high degree who partook and graced his triumph. But his capital offence against the code of manners was the absence of that pudicity which shrinks from exposing to public gaze the deepest emotions of the heart. In Journals originally divulged, and at last published by himself, and throughout his voluminous correspondence, he is "naked and is not ashamed." Some very coarse elements must have entered into the composition of a man who could thus scatter abroad disclosures of the secret communings of his spirit with his Maker.

Akin to this fault is his seeming unconsciousness of the oppressive majesty of the topics with which he was habit-

ually occupied. The seraph in the prophetic vision was arrayed with wings, of which some were given to urge his flight, and others to cover his face. Vigorous as were the pinions with which Whitfield moved, he appears to have been unprovided with those beneath which his eyes should have shrunk from too familiar a contemplation of the ineffable glory. Where prophets and apostles "stood trembling," he is at his ease; where they adored, he declaims. This is, indeed, one of the besetting sins of licentiates in divinity. But few ever moved among the infinitudes and eternities of invisible things with less embarrassment or with less of silent awe. Illustrations might be drawn from every part of his writings, but hardly without committing the irreverence we condemn.

To the lighter graces of taste and fancy Whitfield had no pretension. He wandered from shore to shore unobservant of the wonders of art and nature, and the strange varieties of men and manners which solicited his notice. In sermons in which no resource within his reach is neglected, there is scarcely a trace to be found of such objects having met his eye or arrested his attention. The poetry of the inspired volume awakens in him no corresponding raptures; and the rhythmical quotations which overspread his letters never rise above the *cantilena* of the tabernacle. In polite literature, in physical and moral science, he never advanced much beyond the standard of the grammar-school of St. Mary de Crypt. Even as a theologian, he has no claims to erudition. He appears to have had no Hebrew and little Greek, and to have studied neither ecclesiastical antiquity nor the great divines of modern times. His reading seems to have been confined to a few, and those not the most considerable, of the works of the later nonconformists. Neither is it possible to assign him a place among profound or original thinkers. He was, in fact, almost an uneducated man; and the powers of his mind were never applied, and perhaps could not have been bent successfully, either to the acquisition of abstruse knowledge or to the enlargement of its boundaries. "Let the name of George Whitfield perish if God be glorified," was his own ardent and sincere exclamation. His disciples will hardly acquiesce in their teacher's self-abasement, but will resent, as injurious to him and to their cause, the imputations of enthusiasm, of personal timidity, of irreverence and coarse-

ness of mind, of ignorance and of a mediocrity or absence of the powers of fancy, invention and research. But the apotheosis of saints is no less idolatrous than that of heroes; and they have not imbibed Whitfield's spirit who cannot brook to be told that he had his share of the faults and infirmities which no man more solemnly ascribed to the whole human race.

Such, however, was his energy and self-devotion, that even the defects of his character were rendered subservient to the one end for which he lived. From the days of Paul of Tarsus and Martin Luther to our own, history records the career of no man who, with a less alloy of motives terminating in self, or of passions breaking loose from the control of reason, concentrated all the faculties of his soul with such intensity and perseverance for the accomplishment of one great design. He belonged to that rare variety of the human species of which it has been said that the liberties of mankind depend on their inability to combine in erecting a universal monarchy. With nerves incapable of fatigue, and a buoyant confidence in himself, which no authority, neglect, or opposition could abate, opposing a *pachydermatous* front to all the missiles of scorn and contumely, and yet exquisitely sensitive to the affection which cheered, and the applause which rewarded his labours, unembarrassed by the learning which reveals difficulties, or the meditative powers which suggest doubts; with an insatiable thirst for active occupation, and an unhesitating faith in whatever cause he undertook; he might have been one of the most dangerous enemies of the peace and happiness of the world, if powers so formidable in their possible abuse had not been directed to a beneficent end. Judged by the wisdom which is of the earth, earthy, Whitfield would be pronounced a man whose energy ministered to a vulgar ambition, of which the triumph over his ecclesiastical superiors, and the admiration of unlettered multitudes, were the object and the recompense. Estimated by those whose religious opinions and observances are derived from him by hereditary descent, he is nothing less than an apostle, inspired in the latter ages of the Church to purify her faith and to reform her morals. A more impartial survey of his life and writings may suggest the conclusion, that the homage of admiring crowds, and the blandishments of courtly dames, were neither unwelcome nor unsolicited; that a hie-



rarchy subdued to inaction, if not to silence, gratified his self-esteem: and that, when standing on what he delighted to call his "throne," the current of devout and holy thoughts was not uncontaminated by the admixture of some human exultation. But ill betide him who delights in the too curious dissection of the motives of others, or even of his own. Such anatomists breathe an impure air, and unconsciously contract a sickly mental habit. Whitfield was a great and a holy man; among the foremost of the heroes of philanthropy, and as a preacher without a superior or a rival.

If eloquence be justly defined by the emotions it excites, or by the activity it quickens, the greatest orator of our times was he who first announced the victory of Waterloo—if that station be not rather due to the learned President of the College of Physicians, who daily makes the ears to tingle of those who listen to his prognostics. But the converse of the rule may be more readily admitted, and we may confidently exclude from the list of eloquent speakers him whose audience is impassive whilst he addresses them, and inactive afterwards. Every seventh day a great company of preachers raise their voices in the land to detect our sins, to explain our duty, to admonish, to alarm and to console. Compare the prodigious extent of this apparatus with its perceptible results, and, inestimable as they are, who will deny that they disappointed the hopes which antecedently to experience, the least sanguine would have indulged? The preacher has, indeed, no novelties to communicate. His path has been trodden hard and dry by constant use; yet he speaks as an ambassador from Heaven, and his hearers are frail, sorrowing, perplexed and dying men. The highest interests of both are at stake. The preacher's eye rests on his manuscript; the hearer's turns to the clock; the half hour glass runs out its sand; and the portals close on well-dressed groups of critics, looking for all the world as if just dismissed from a lecture on the tertiary strata.

Taking his stand on some rising knoll, his tall and graceful figure dressed with elaborate propriety, and composed into an easy and commanding attitude, Whitfield's clear blue eye ranged over thousands, and tens of thousands, drawn up in close files on the plain below, or clustering into masses on every adjacent eminence. A "rabble rout" hung on the skirts of the mighty host; and the feel-

ings of the devout were disturbed by the scurrile jests of the illiterate, and the cold sarcasms of the more polished spectators of their worship. But the rich and varied tones of a voice of unequalled depth and compass quickly silenced every ruder sound—as in rapid succession its ever-changing melodies passed from the calm of simple narrative, to the measured distinctness of argument, to the vehemence of reproof, and the pathos of heavenly consolation. “Sometimes the preacher wept exceedingly, stamped loudly and passionately, and was frequently so overcome that for a few seconds one would suspect he could never recover, and, when he did, nature required some little time to compose herself.” In words originally applied to one of the first German Reformers—*vividus vultus, vividi oculi, vivida manus, denique omnia vivida*. The agitated assembly caught the passions of the speaker, and exulted, wept, or trembled at his bidding. He stood before them, in popular belief, a persecuted man, spurned and rejected by lordly prelates, yet still a presbyter of the Church, and clothed with her authority; his meek and lowly demeanour chastened and elevated by the conscious grandeur of the apostolic succession. The thoughtful gazed earnestly on the scene of solemn interest, pregnant with some strange and enduring influence on the future condition of mankind. But the wise and the simple alike yielded to the enchantment; and the thronging multitude gave utterance to their emotions in every form in which nature seeks relief from feeling too strong for mastery.

Whitfield had cultivated the histrionic art to a perfection which has rarely been obtained by any who have worn the sock or the buskin. Foote and Garrick were his frequent hearers, and brought away with them the characteristic and very just remark, that “his oratory was not at its full height until he had repeated a discourse forty times.” The transient delirium of Franklin—attested by the surrender on one occasion of all the contents of his purse at a “charity sermon,” and by the Quaker’s refusal to lend more to a man who had lost his wits—did not prevent his investigating the causes of this unwonted excitement. “I came,” he says, “by hearing him often, to distinguish between sermons newly composed and those he had preached often in the course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improved by frequent repetition, that every accent, every

emphasis, every modulation of the voice was so perfectly timed, that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse—a pleasure of much the same kind as that received from an excellent piece of music.”

The basis of the singular dominion which was thus exercised by Whitfield during a period equal to that assigned by ordinary calculation for the continuance of human life, would repay a more careful investigation than we have space or leisure to attempt. Amongst subordinate influences, the faintest of all is that which may have been occasionally exercised over the more refined and sensitive members of his congregations by the romantic scenery in which they assembled. But the tears shaping “white gutters down the black faces of the colliers, black as they came out of the coal pits,” were certainly not shed under any overwhelming sense of the picturesque. The preacher himself appears to have felt and courted this excitement. “The open firmament above me, the prospect of the adjacent fields, to which sometimes was added the solemnity of the approaching evening, was,” he says, “almost too much for me.” But a far more effectual resource was found in the art of diverting into a new and unexpected channel, the feelings of a multitude already brought together with objects the most strangely contrasted to his own. Journeying to Wales, he passes over Hampton Common, and finds himself surrounded by twelve thousand people collected to see a man hung in chains, and an extempore pulpit is immediately provided within sight of this deplorable object. On another similar occasion, the wretched culprit was permitted to steal an hour from the eternity before him, while listening, or seeming to listen, to a sermon delivered by Whitfield to himself and to the spectators of his approaching doom. He reaches Basingstroke, when the inhabitants are engaged in all the festivities of a country fair, and thus records the use he made of so tempting an opportunity. “As I passed on horseback I saw the stage, and as I rode further I met divers coming to the revel, which affected me so much that I had no rest in my spirit, and therefore having asked counsel of God, and perceiving an unusual warmth and power enter into my soul, though I was gone above a mile, I could not bear to see so many dear souls for whom Christ had died ready to perish, and no minister

or magistrate to interpose; upon this, I told my dear fellow-travellers that I was resolved to follow the example of Howell Harris in Wales, and bear my testimony against such lying vanities, let the consequences to my own private person be what they would. They immediately assenting, I rode back to the town, got upon the stage erected for the wrestlers, and began to show them the error of their ways."

The often told tale of Whitfield's controversy with the Merry-Andrew at Moorfields, still more curiously illustrates the skill and intrepidity with which he contrived to divert to his own purposes an excitement running at high tide in the opposite direction. The following is an extract from his own narrative of the encounter.

"For many years, from one end of Moorfields to the other, booths of all kinds have been erected for mountebanks, players, puppet-shows, and such like. With a heart bleeding with compassion for so many thousands led captive by the devil at his will, on Whit-Monday, at six o'clock in the morning, attended by a large congregation of praying people, I ventured to lift up a standard amongst them, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Perhaps there were about ten thousand in waiting, not for me, but for Satan's instruments to amuse them. Glad was I to find that I had for once, as it were, got the start of the devil. I mounted my field pulpit; almost all flocked immediately around it; I preached on these words—"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," &c. They gazed, they listened, they wept, and I believe that many felt themselves stung with deep conviction for their past sins. All was hushed and solemn. Being thus encouraged I ventured out again at noon. The whole fields seemed, in a bad sense of the word, all white, ready not for the Redeemer's but for Beelzebub's harvest. All his agents were in full motion. Drummers, trumpeters, Merry-Andrews, masters of puppet-shows, exhibitions of wild beasts, players, &c., all busy in entertaining their respective auditors. I suppose there could not be less than twenty or thirty thousand people. My pulpit was fixed on the opposite side, and immediately, to their great mortification, they found the number of their attendants sadly lessened. Judging that, like St. Paul, I should now be called, as it were, to fight with beasts at Ephesus, I preached from these words, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

You may easily guess that there was some noise among the craftsmen, and that I was honoured with having a few stones, dirt, rotten eggs and pieces of dead cats thrown at me, whilst engaged in calling them from their favourite but lying vanities. My soul was indeed among lions, but far the greatest part of my congregation, which was very large, seemed for awhile turned into lambs. This Satan could not brook. One of his choicest servants was exhibiting, trumpeting on a large stage, but as soon as the people saw me in my black robes and my pulpit, I think all to a man left him and ran to me. For awhile I was enabled to lift my voice like a trumpet, and many heard the joyful sound. God's people kept praying, and the enemy's agents made a kind of roaring at some distance from our camp. At length they approached near, and the Merry-Andrew got up on a man's shoulders, and, advancing near the pulpit, attempted to lash me with a long heavy whip several times, but always with the violence of his motion tumbled down. I think I continued in praying, preaching and singing (for the noise was too great to preach,) for about three hours. We then retired to the Tabernacle, with my pockets full of notes from persons brought under concern, and read them amidst the praises and spiritual acclamations of thousands. Three hundred and fifty awakened souls were received in one day, and I believe the number of notes exceeded a thousand."

The propensity to mirth which, in common with all men of robust mental constitution, Whitfield possessed in an unusual degree, was, like every thing else belonging to him, compelled to minister to the interest and success of his preaching; but however much his pleasantries may attest the buoyancy of his mind, it would be difficult to assign them any other praise. Oscillating in spirit as well as in body, between Drury-Lane and the Tabernacle, Shuter, the comedian, attended in Tottenham Court Road during the run of his successful performance of the character of Ramble, and was greeted with the following apostrophe—"And thou, poor Ramble, who hast so long rambled from Him, come thou also. Oh! end thy ramblings, and come to Jesus." The preacher in this instance descended not a little below the level of the player.

In the eighteenth century the crown of martyrdom was a prize for which Roman Catholics alone were permitted



to contend, and Whitfield was unable to gain the influence which he would have derived from the stake, from a prison or a confiscation. Conscious, however, of the importance of such sufferings, he persuaded himself and desired to convince the world, that he had to endure them. The Bishops were persecutors, because they repelled with some acrimony his attacks on their authority and reputation. The mob were persecutors, because they pelted a man who insisted on their hearing him preach when they wanted to see a bear dance, or a conjurer eat fire. A magistrate was a persecutor, because he summoned him to appear on an unfounded charge, and then dismissed him on his own recognisance. He gloried with better reason in the contemptuous language with which he was assailed, even by the more decorous of his opponents, and in the ribaldries of Foot and Bickerstaff. He would gladly have partaken of the doom of Rogers and Ridley, if his times had permitted, and his cause required it; but the fires of Smithfield were put out, and the exasperated Momus of the fair, with his long whip, alone remained to do the honours appropriated to the feast of St. Bartholomew.

There are extant seventy-five of the sermons by which Whitfield agitated nations, and the more remote influence of which is still distinctly to be traced, in the popular divinity and the national character of Great Britain and of the United States. They have, however, fallen into neglect; for to win permanent acceptance for a book, into which the principles of life were not infused by its author, is a miracle which not even the zeal of religious proselytes can accomplish. Yet, inferior as were his inventive to his mimetic powers, Whitfield is entitled, among theological writers, to a place, which if it cannot challenge admiration, may at least excite and reward curiosity. Many, and those by far the worst, of his discourses, bear the marks of careful preparation. Take at hazard a sermon of one of the preachers usually distinguished as evangelical, add a little to its length, and subtract a great deal from its point and polish, and you have one of his more elaborate performances—common topics discussed in a commonplace way; a respectable mediocrity of thought and style; endless variations on one or two cardinal truths—in short, the task of a clerical Saturday evening, executed with piety, good sense and exceeding sedateness. But open one of that series

of Whitfield's sermons which bears the stamp of having been conceived and uttered at the same moment, and imagine it recited to myriads of eager listeners with every charm of voice and gesture, and the secret of his unrivalled fascination is at least partially disclosed. He places himself on terms of intimacy and unreserved confidence with you, and makes it almost as difficult to decline the invitation to his familiar talk as if Montagne himself had issued it. The egotism is amusing, affectionate and warm-hearted; with just that slight infusion of self-importance without which it would pass for affectation. In his art of rhetoric, personification holds the first place; and the *prosopopæia* is so managed as to quicken abstractions into life, and to give them individuality and distinctness without the exhibition of any of those spasmodic and distorted images which obey the incantations of vulgar exorcists. Every trace of study and contrivance is obliterated by the hearty earnestness which pervades each successive period, and by the vernacular and homely idioms in which his meaning is conveyed. The recollection of William Cobbett will obtrude itself on the reader of these discourses, though the presence of the sturdy athlete of the "Political Register," with his sophistry and his sarcasm, his drollery and his irascible vigour, sorely disturbs the sacred emotions which it was the one object of the preacher to awaken. And it is in this grandeur and singleness of purpose that the charm of Whitfield's preaching seems really to have consisted. You feel that you have to do with a man who lived and spoke, and who would gladly have died, to deter his hearers from the path of destruction, and to guide them to holiness and peace. His gossiping stories, and dramatic forms of speech, are never employed to hide the awful realities on which he is intent. Conscience is not permitted to find an intoxicating draught in even spiritual excitement, or an anodyne in glowing imagery. Guilt and its punishment, pardon and spotless purity, death and an eternal existence, stand out in bold relief on every page. From these the eye of the teacher is never withdrawn, and to these the attention of the hearer is riveted. All that is poetic, grotesque, or rapturous, is employed to deepen these impressions, and is dismissed as soon as that purpose is answered. Deficient in learning, meagre in thought and redundant in language as are these discourses, they yet fulfil the one great condi-

tion of genuine eloquence. They propagate their own kindly warmth, and leave their stings behind them.

The enumeration of the sources of Whitfield's power is still essentially defective. Neither energy, nor eloquence, nor histrionic talents, nor any artifices of style, nor the most genuine sincerity and self-devotedness, nor all these united, would have enabled him to mould the religious character of millions in his own and future generations. The secret lies deeper, though not very deep. It consisted in the nature of the theology he taught—in its perfect simplicity and universal application. His thirty or forty thousand sermons were but so many variations on two key-notes. Man is guilty, and may obtain forgiveness; he is immortal, and must ripen here for endless weal or woe hereafter. Expanded into innumerable forms, and diversified by infinite varieties of illustration, these two cardinal principles were ever in his heart and on his tongue. Let who would invoke poetry to embellish the Christian system, or philosophy to explore its esoteric depths, from his lips it was delivered as an awful and urgent summons to repent, to believe and to obey. To set to music the orders issued to seamen in a storm, or to address them in the language of Aristotle or Descartes, would have seemed to him not a whit more preposterous than to divert his hearers from their danger and their refuge, their duties and their hopes, to any topics more trivial or more abstruse. In fine, he was thoroughly and continually in earnest, and, therefore, possessed that tension of the soul which admitted neither of lassitude nor relaxation, few and familiar as were the topics to which he was confined. His was, therefore, precisely that state of mind in which alone eloquence, properly so called, can be engendered, and a moral and intellectual sovereignty won.

A still more important topic we pass over silently, not as doubting, or reluctant to acknowledge, the reality of that Divine influence, of which the greatest benefactors of mankind are at most but the voluntary agents; but because, desiring to observe the proprieties of time and place, we abandon such discussions to pages more sacred than our own.

The effects of Whitfield's labours on succeeding times have been thrown into the shade by the more brilliant fortunes of the Ecclesiastical Dynasty of which Wesley was

at once the founder, the lawgiver and the head. Yet a large proportion of the American Churches, and that great body of the Church of England which, assuming the title of Evangelical, has been refused that of Orthodox, may trace back their spiritual genealogy, by regular descent from him. It appears, indeed, that there are among them some who, for having disavowed this ancestry, have brought themselves within the swing of Mr. Philip's club. To rescue them, if it were possible, from the bruises which they have provoked, would be to arrest the legitimate march of penal justice. The consanguinity is attested by historical records and by the strongest family resemblance. The quarterings of Whitfield are entitled to a conspicuous place in the Evangelical scutcheon; and they who bear it are not wise in being ashamed of the blazonry.

Four conspicuous names connect the great field-preacher with the Evangelical body, as it at present exists in the Church of England. The first of these, Henry Venn, exhibited in a systematic form the doctrines and precepts of the Evangelical divinity in a treatise, bearing the significant title of the "*New Whole Duty of Man*." He was the founder of that "school of the prophets," which has, to the present day, continued to flourish with unabated or increasing vigour in the University of Cambridge, and the writer of a series of letters which have lately been edited by one of his lineal descendants. They possess the peculiar and very powerful charm of giving utterance to the most profound affections in grave, chaste, and simple language, and indicate a rare subjection of the intellectual, and sensitive, to the spiritual nature—of an intellect of no common vigour, and a sensibility of exquisite acuteness, to a spirit at once elevated and subdued by devout contemplations.

He was followed by Joseph Milner, who, in a history of the Church of Christ, traced, from the days of the Apostles to the Reformation, the perpetual succession of an interior society by which the tenets of the Calvinistic Methodists had been received and transmitted as a sacred deposit from age to age. A man of more spotless truth and honesty than Milner never yet assumed the historical office. But he was encumbered at once by a theory, and by the care of a grammar-school; the one anticipating his judgments, the other narrowing the range of his investiga-

tions. His "apparatus" included little more than the New Testament, the Fathers, and the ecclesiastical historians. To explore, to concentrate, and to scrutinize with philosophical scepticism, the evidences by which they are illustrated and explained, was a task unsuited alike to his powers, his devotion, and his taste. He has bequeathed to the world a book which can never lose its interest, either with those who read to animate their piety, or with those who, in their search for historical truth, are willing not merely to examine the proofs, but to listen to the advocates.

John Newton, most generally known as the friend and spiritual guide of Cowper, has yet better claims to celebrity. For many years the standard bearer of his section of the Anglican Church in London, he was the writer of many works, and especially of an autobiography, which is to be numbered amongst the most singular and impressive delineations of human character. A more rare psychological phenomenon than Newton was never subjected to the examination of the curious. The captain of a slave-ship, given up at one time to all manner of vice and debauchery, gradually emerges into a perfect Oroonates, haunted to the verge of madness by the sentimental Psyche, but is still a slave-trader. He studies the Scriptures and the classics in his cabin, while his captives are writhing in mental and bodily agonies in the hold. With nerves of iron, and sinews of brass, he combines an almost feminine tenderness, and becomes successively the victim of remorse, a penitent, a clergyman, an eminent preacher, an author of no mean pretensions in verse and prose, beloved and esteemed by the wise and good; and at an extreme old age closes in honour, peace, and humble hope, a life of strange vicissitudes, and of still stranger contrasts. The position which he has the courage to challenge for himself in the chronicle of his party, is that of an example of the salutary influence of their principles on a man once given up to reckless guilt. His friends and followers, with more discretion, and at least equal truth, assert for him the praise of having consecrated his riper and declining years to the practice of pure and undefiled religion; and to the inculcation of it with all the vigour of his natural disposition, tempered by a composure and adorned by an elegance, the most remote from his primitive character.



The last of the fathers of the Evangelical Church was Thomas Scott, the author of many books, and amongst these of a treatise called the "Force of Truth," which records his own mental history; and of a Commentary on the Bible, in which the truth he sought and believed himself to have found is discovered in almost every page of the inspired volume. Scott was nothing less than a prodigy of autodidactic knowledge. Bred up in humble life, with little education, regular or irregular, and immersed from youth to age in clerical cares (of which a well-filled nursery and an ill-filled purse seem inevitable parts,) he had neither money to multiply books, nor much leisure or inclination to read them. But he studied his congregation, his bible and himself. From those investigations, conducted with admirable sagacity, good faith and perseverance, he accumulated a fund of thought indigenous if not original, accurate if not profound, which, considered as the gathering of a solitary mind, is altogether marvellous. In the later editions of his work, indeed, he interspersed such learning as he had derived from subsequent study. But, inverting the established order, he seems to have published his own books first, and to have read those of other men afterwards. Such a process, executed with such zeal and earnestness, if aided by a vivid imagination, would have rendered his speculations instinct with breath and life; if directed by vanity, it would have ascribed to the sacred oracles some wild novelties of meaning at jar with the sense and spirit of their authors; if guided by mercenary views, it would have brought them into harmony with the opinions of the orthodox dispensers of ecclesiastical emoluments and honours. But imagination in the mind of Thomas Scott was not merely wanting, it was a negative quantity; and his chariot-wheels drove heavily. The thirst of praise or of wealth was quenched by a desire as simple and as pure as ever prompted human activity to promote the Divine glory and the good of man. He would have seen the labours of his life perish, and would have perished with them, rather than distort the sense of revelation by a hair's breadth from what he believed to be its genuine meaning. He rendered to his party (if with such a man party can be fitly associated) the inestimable service of showing how their distinguishing tenets may be deduced from the sacred canon, or reconciled with it; and of placing

their feet on that which Chillingworth had proclaimed as the rock of the Reformation.

Gradually, however, it came to pass in the Evangelical, as in other societies, that the symbol was adopted by many who were strangers to the spirit of the original institution;—by many an indolent, trivial, or luxurious aspirant to its advantages, both temporal and eternal. The terms of membership had never been definite or severe. Whitfield and his followers had required from those who joined their standard neither the adoption of any new ritual, nor the abandonment of any established ceremonies, nor an irksome submission to ecclesiastical authority, nor the renunciation of any reputable path to eminence or to wealth. The distinguishing tenets were few and easily learned; the necessary observances neither onerous nor unattended with much pleasurable emotion. In the lapse of years the discipline of the society imperceptibly declined, and errors coeval with its existence exhibited themselves in an exaggerated form. When country gentlemen and merchants, lords spiritual and temporal, and even fashionable ladies gave in their adhesion, their dignities uninvaded, their ample expenditure flowing chiefly in its accustomed channels, and their saloons as crowded if not as brilliant as before, the spirit of Whitfield was to be traced among his followers, not so much in the burning zeal and self-devotion of that extraordinary man, as in his insubordination to episcopal rule and unquenchable thirst for spiritual excitement. Although the fields and the market-places no longer echoed to the voice of the impassioned preacher and the hallelujahs of enraptured myriads; yet spacious theatres, sacred to such uses, received a countless host to harangue or to applaud; to recount or to hear adventures of stirring interest; to propagate the Christian faith to the furthest recesses of the globe; to drop the superfluous guinea, and to retire with feelings strangely balanced between the human and the divine, the glories of heaven and the vanities of earth.

The venerable cloisters of Oxford sheltered a new race of students, who listened not without indignation, to the rumours of this religious movement. Invigorated by habitual self-denial; of unsullied, perhaps of austere virtue; with intellectual powers of no vulgar cast; and deeply conversant with Christian antiquity,—they acknowledged a Divine command to recall their country to a piety more

profound and masculine, more meek and contemplative. They spoke in the name and with the authority of the "Catholic Church," the supreme interpreter of the holy mysteries confided to her care. That sublime abstraction has not indeed, as of yore, a visible throne and a triple crown; nor can she now point to the successors of the fishermen of Galilee collected into a sacred college at the Vatican. Though still existing in a mysterious unity of communion, faith and practice, she is present in every land and among all people, where due honour is paid to the Episcopal office derived by an unbroken succession from the Apostles. Her doctrines are those to which Rome and Constantinople have made some corrupt additions, but which the Ante-Nicene fathers professed and our Anglo-Saxon ancestors adopted. She requires the rigid observance of her ancient formularies, and calls on her children to adore rather than to investigate. She announces tenets which the unlearned must submissively receive with a modest self-distrust; inculcates a morality which pervades and sanctifies the most minute, not less than the more considerable of our actions; and demands a piety which is to be avowed not by the utterance of religious sentiments, nor by a retreat from the ordinary pursuits or pleasures of the world, but by the silent tenour of a devout life. If among the teachers of this new or restored divinity, Oxford should raise up another Whitfield, the principles for which the martyrs of the Reformation died might be in peril of at least a temporary subversion, in that church which has for the last three centuries numbered Cranmer, Hooper, and Ridley, amongst her most venerated fathers. The extent of the danger will be best estimated by a short survey of the career of the only confessor of Oxford Catholicism, who has yet taken his place in ecclesiastical biography.

Richard Hurrell Froude was born "on the Feast of the Annunciation" in 1803, and died in 1836. He was an Etonian; a fellow of Oriel College; a priest in holy orders; the writer of journals, letters, sermons and unsuccessful prize essays; an occasional contributor to the periodical literature of his theological associates; and, during the last four years of his life, a resident alternately in the South of Europe and the West Indies. If the progress of his name to oblivion shall be arrested for some brief interval, it will

be owing to the strange discretion with which his surviving friends have disclosed to the world the curious and melancholy portraiture drawn by his own hand of the effects of their peculiar system. "The extreme importance of the views to the development of which the whole is meant to be subservient," and "the instruction derivable from a full exhibition of his character as a witness to those views," afford the inadequate apology for inviting the world to read a self-examination as frank and unreserved as the most courageous man could have committed to paper in this unscrupulous and inquisitive generation. Yet, if the editors of Mr. Froude's papers are the depositories of those which his mother appears to have written, and will publish them also, it will be impossible to refuse them absolution from whatever penalties they may have already incurred. These volumes contain but one letter from that lady; and it contrasts with the productions of her son as the voice of a guardian angel with the turbulent language of a spirit to which it had been appointed to minister. She read his heart with a mother's sagacity, and thus revealed it to himself with a mother's tenderness and truth.

"From his very birth his temper has been peculiar; pleasing, intelligent and attaching, when his mind was undisturbed and he was in the company of people who treated him reasonably and kindly; but exceedingly impatient under vexatious circumstances; very much disposed to find his own amusement in teasing and vexing others; and almost entirely incorrigible when it was necessary to reprove him. I never could find a successful mode of treating him. Harshness made him obstinate and gloomy; calm and long displeasure made him stupid and sullen; and kind patience had not sufficient power over his feelings to force him to govern himself. After a statement of such great faults, it may seem an inconsistency to say, that he nevertheless still bore about him strong marks of a promising character. In all points of substantial principle his feelings were just and high. He had (for his age) an unusually deep feeling of admiration for every thing which was good and noble; his relish was lively and his taste good, for all the pleasures of the imagination; and he was also quite conscious of his own faults, and (untempted) had a just dislike to them."

Though the mother and the child are both beyond the reach of all human opinion, it seems almost an impiety to



transcribe her estimate of his early character, and to add, that, when developed and matured in his riper years, it but too distinctly fulfilled her less favourable judgment. Exercising a stern and absolute dominion over all the baser passions, with a keen perception of the beautiful in nature and in art, and a deep homage for the sublime in morals; imbued with the spirit of the classical authors, and delighting in the strenuous exercise of talents which, if they fell short of excellence, rose far above mediocrity, Mr. Froude might have seemed to want no promise of an honourable rank in literature, or of distinction in his sacred office. His career was intercepted by a premature death, but enough is recorded to show that his aspirations, however noble, must have been defeated by the pride and moroseness which his mother's wisdom detected, and which her love disclosed to him; united as they were to a constitutional distrust of his own powers and a weak reliance on other minds for guidance and support. A spirit at once haughty and unsustained by genuine self-confidence; subdued by the stronger will or intellect of other men, and glorying in that subjection; regarding its opponents with an intolerance exceeding their own; and, in the midst of all, turning with no infrequent indignation on itself—might form the basis of a good dramatic sketch, of which Mr. Froude might not unworthily sustain the burden. But a "dialogue of the dead," in which George Whitfield and Richard Froude should be the interlocutors, would be a more appropriate channel for illustrating the practical uses of "the second reformation," and of the "Catholic restoration," which it is the object of their respective biographies to illustrate. Rhadamanthus having dismissed them from his tribunal, they would compare together their juvenile admiration of the drama, their ascetic discipline at Oxford, their early dependence on stronger or more resolute minds, their propensity to self-observation and to record its results on paper, their opinions of the negro race, and the surprise with which they witnessed the worship of the Church of Rome in lands where it is still triumphant. So far all is peace, and the *concordes animæ* exchange such greetings as pass between disembodied spirits. But when the tidings brought by the new denizen of the Elysian fields to the reformer of the eighteenth century, reach his affrighted shade, the regions of the blessed are disturbed by an un-



wanted discord; and the fiery soul of Whitfield blazes with intense desire to resume his wanderings through the earth, and to lift up his voice against the new apostacy.

It was with no unmanly dread of the probe, but from want of skill or leisure to employ it, that the self-scrutiny of Whitfield seldom or never penetrated much below the surface. Preach he must; and when no audience could be brought together, he seized a pen and exhorted himself. The uppermost feeling, be it what it may, is put down in his journal honestly, vigorously and devoutly. Satan is menaced and upbraided. Intimations from Heaven are recorded without one painful doubt of their origin. He prays and exults, anticipates the future with delight, looks back to the past with thankfulness, blames himself simply because he thinks himself to blame, despairs of nothing, fears nothing, and has not a moment's ill-will to any human being.

Mr. Froude conducts his written soliloquies in a different spirit. His introverted gaze analyzes with elaborate minuteness the various motives at the confluence of which his active powers receive their impulse, and, with perverted sagacity, pursues the self-examination, until, bewildered in the dark labyrinth of his own nature, he escapes to the cheerful light of day by locking up his journal. "A friend," (whose real name is as distinctly intimated under its initial letter as if the patronymic were written at length,) "advises burning confessions. I cannot make up my mind to that," replies the penitent, "but I think I can see many points in which it will be likely to do me good to be cut off for some time from these records." On such a subject the author of "The Christian Year" was entitled to more deference. The great ornament of the *College de Propaganda* at Oxford, he also had used the mental microscope to excess. Admonishing men to approach their Creator not as isolated beings, but as members of the Universal Church, and teaching the inmates of her hallowed courts to worship in strains so pure, so reverent and so meek, as to answer not unworthily to the voice of hope and reconciliation in which she is addressed by her Divine Head, yet had this "sweet singer" so brooded over the evanescent processes of his own spiritual nature, as not seldom to throw round his meaning a haze which rendered it imperceptible to his readers and probably to himself. With

what sound judgment he counselled Mr. Froude to burn his books may be judged from the following entries in them:—

“I have been talking a great deal to B. about religion to-day. He seems to take such straightforward practical views of it that, when I am talking to him, I wonder what I have been bothering myself with all the summer, and almost doubt how far it is right to allow myself to indulge in speculations on a subject where all that is necessary is so plain and obvious.”—“Yesterday when I went out shooting, I fancied I did not care whether I hit or not, but when it came to the point I found myself anxious, and, after having killed, was not unwilling to let myself be considered a better shot than I had described myself. I had an impulse, too, to let it be thought I had only three shots when I really had had four. It was slight, to be sure, but I felt it.”—“I have read my journal, though I can hardly identify myself with the person it describes. It seems like leaving some one under one’s guardianship who was an intolerable fool, and exposed himself to my contempt every moment for the most ridiculous and trifling motives; and while I was thinking all this, I went into L’s room to seek a pair of shoes, and on hearing him coming got away as silently as possible. Why did I do this? Did I think I was doing what L. did not like, or was it the relic of a sneaking habit? I will ask myself these questions again.”—“I have a sort of vanity which aims at my own good opinion, and I look for any thing to prove to myself that I am more anxious to mind myself than other people. I was very hungry, but because I thought the charge unreasonable, I tried to shirk the waiter; sneaking!”—“Yesterday I was much put out by an old fellow chewing tobacco and spitting across me; also bad thoughts of various kinds kept presenting themselves to my mind when it was vacant.”—“I talked sillily to-day as I used to do last term, but took no pleasure in it, so I am not ashamed. Although I don’t recollect any harm of myself, yet I don’t feel that I have made a clean breast of it.”—“I forgot to mention that I had been looking round my rooms and thinking that they looked comfortable and nice, and that I said in my heart, Ah, ha! I am warm.”—“It always suggests itself to me that a wise thought is wasted when it is kept to myself, against which, as it is my most bothering temptation, I will set down some arguments to be called to mind in time of trouble.”—“Now

I am proud of this, and think that the knowledge it shows of myself implies a greatness of mind."—"These records are no guide to me to show the state of my mind afterwards; they are so far from being exercises of humility, that they lessen the shame of what I record just as professions and good will to other people reconcile us to our neglect of them."

The precept "know thyself" came down from heaven; but such self-knowledge as this has no heavenward tendency. It is no part of the economy of our nature, or of the will of our Maker, that we should so cunningly unravel the subtle filaments of which our motives are composed. If a man should subject to such a scrutiny the feelings of others to himself, he would soon lose his faith in human virtue and affection; and the mind which should thus put to the question its own workings in the domestic or social relations of life would ere long become the victim of a still more fatal scepticism. Why dream that this reflex operation, which, if directed towards those feelings of which our fellow-creatures are the object, would infallibly eject from the heart all love and all respect for man, should strengthen either the love or the fear of God? A well-tutored conscience aims at breadth rather than minuteness of survey; and tasks itself much more to ascertain general results than to find out the solution of riddles. So long as religious men must reveal their "experiences," and self-defamation revels in its present impunity, there is no help for it, but in withholding the applause to which even lowliness itself aspires for the candour with which it is combined, and the acuteness by which it is embellished.

It is not by these nice self-observers that the creeds of hoar antiquity, and the habits of centuries are to be shaken; nor is such high emprise reserved for ascetics who can pause to enumerate the slices of bread and butter from which they have abstained. When Whitfield would mortify his body, he set about it like a man. The paroxysm was short, indeed, but terrible. While it lasted his diseased imagination brought soul and body into deadly conflict, the fierce spirit spurning, trampling, and well-nigh destroying the peccant carcass. Not so the fastidious and refined "witness to the views" of the restorers of the Catholic Church. The strife between his spiritual and animal nature is recorded in his journal in such terms as

these—"Looked with greediness to see if there was goose on the table for dinner."—"Meant to have kept a fast, and did abstain from dinner, but at tea eat buttered toast."—"Tasted nothing to-day till tea-time, and then only one cup and dry bread."—"I have kept my fast strictly, having taken nothing till near nine this evening, and then only a cup of tea and a little bread without butter, but it has not been as easy as it was last."—"I made rather a more hearty tea than usual, quite giving up the notion of a fast in W's rooms, and by this weakness have occasioned another slip."

Whatever may be thought of the propriety of disclosing such passages as these, they will provoke a contemptuous smile from no one who knows much of his own heart. But they may relieve the anxiety of the alarmists. Luther and Zuingle, Cranmer, and Latimer, may still rest in their honoured graves. "Take courage, brother Ridley, we shall light up such a flame in England as shall not soon be put out," is a prophecy which will not be defeated by the successors of those who heard it, so long as their confessors shall be vacant to record, and their doctors to publish, contrite reminiscences of a desire for roasted goose, and of an undue indulgence in buttered toast.

Yet the will to subvert the doctrines and discipline of the Reformation is not wanting, and is not concealed. Mr. Froude himself, were he still living, might, indeed, object to be judged by his careless and familiar letters. No such objection can, however, be made by the eminent persons who have deliberately given them to the world on account of "the truth and extreme importance of the views to which the whole is meant to be subservient," and in which they record their "own general concurrence." Of these weighty truths take the following examples:—

"You will be shocked at my avowal that I am every day becoming a less and less loyal son of the Reformation. It appears to me plain, that in all matters which seem to us indifferent, or even doubtful, we should conform our practices to those of the Church, which has preserved its traditionary practices unbroken. We cannot know about any seemingly indifferent practice of the Church of Rome that is not a development of the apostolic *ηθος*, and it is to no purpose to say that we can find no proof of it in the writings of the first six centuries—they must find a disproof if they

would do any thing.”—“I think people are injudicious who talk against the Roman Catholics for worshipping saints and honouring the Virgin and images, &c. These things may, perhaps, be idolatrous; I cannot make up my mind about it.”—“P. called us the Papal Protestant Church, in which he proved a double ignorance, as we are Catholics without the Popery, and Church of England men without the Protestantism.”—“The more I think over that view of yours about regarding our present communion service, &c., as a judgment on the Church, and taking it as the crumbs from the apostle’s table, the more I am struck with its fitness to be dwelt upon as tending to check the intrusion of irreverent thoughts, without in any way interfering with one’s just indignation.”—“Your trumpery principle about Scripture being the sole rule of faith in fundamentals (I nauseate the word,) is but a mutilated edition, without the breadth and axiomatic character, of the original.”—“Really I hate the Reformation and the Reformers more and more, and have almost made up my mind that the rationalist spirit they set afloat is the *ψευδοπροφητης* of the Revelation.” Why do you praise Ridley? Do you know sufficient good about him to counterbalance the fact, that he was the associate of Cranmer, Peter Martyr, and Bucer?”—“I wish you could get to know something of S. and W. (Southey and Wordsworth,) and un-protestantize and un-Miltonize them.”—“*How is it we are so much in advance of our generation?*”

Spirit of George Whitfield! how would thy voice, rolled from “the secret place of thunders,” have overwhelmed these puny protests against the truths which it proclaimed from the rising to the setting sun! In what does the modern creed of Oxford differ from the ancient faith of Rome? Hurried along by the abhorred current of advancing knowledge and social improvement, they have indeed renounced papal dominion, and denied papal infallibility, and rejected the grosser superstitions which Rome herself at once despises and promotes. But a prostrate submission to human authority (though veiled under words of vague and mysterious import)—the repose of the wearied or indolent mind on external observances—an escape from the arduous exercise of man’s highest faculties in the worship of his Maker—the usurped dominion of the imaginative and sensitive over the intellectual powers—these are the common characteristics of both systems.



The Reformation restored to the Christian world its only authentic canon, and its one Supreme Head. It proclaimed the Scriptures as the rule of life; and the Divine Redeemer as the supreme and central object to whom every eye must turn, and on whom every hope must rest. It cast down not only the idols erected for the adoration of the vulgar, but the idolatrous abstractions to which the worship of more cultivated minds was rendered. Penetrating the design, and seizing the spirit of the gospels, the reformers inculcated the faith in which the sentient and the spiritual in man's compound nature had each its appropriate office; the one directed to the Redeemer in his palpable form, the other to the Divine Paraclete in his hidden agency; while, united with these, they exhibited to a sinful but penitent race the parental character of the Omnipresent Deity. Such is not the teaching of the restored theology. The most eminent of its professors have thrown open the doors of Mr. Froude's oratory, and have invited all passers-by to notice in his prayers and meditations "the absence of any distinct mention of our Lord and Saviour." They are exhorted not to doubt that there was a real though silent "allusion to Christ" under the titles in which the Supreme Being is addressed; and are told that "this circumstance may be a comfort to those who cannot bring themselves to assume the tone of many popular writers of this day, who yet are discouraged by the peremptoriness with which it is exacted of them. The truth is, that a mind alive to its own real state often shrinks to utter what it most dwells upon; and is too full of awe and fear to do more than silently hope what it most wishes." It would indeed be presumptuous to pass a censure, or to hazard an opinion, on the private devotions of any man; but there is no such risk in rejecting the apology which the publishers of those secret exercises have advanced for Mr. Froude's departure from the habits of his fellow Christians. Feeble, indeed, and emasculate must be the system, which, in its delicate distaste for the "popular writers of the day," would bury in silence the name in which every tongue and language has been summoned to worship and to rejoice. Well may "awe and fear" become all who assume and all who invoke it. But an "awe" which "shrinks to utter" the name of Him who was born at Bethlehem, and yet does not fear to use the name which is ineffable;—a "fear" which can make

mention of the Father, but may not speak of the Brother, of all—is a feeling which fairly baffles comprehension. There is a much more simple, though a less imposing theory. Mr. Froude permitted himself, and was encouraged by his correspondents, to indulge in the language of antipathy and scorn towards a large body of his fellow Christians. It tinges his letters, his journals, and is not without its influence even on his devotions. Those despised men too often celebrated the events of their Redeemer's life, and the benefits of his passion, in language of offensive familiarity, and invoked him with fond and feeble epithets. Therefore, a good Oxford Catholic must envelop in mystic terms all allusion to Him round whom as its centre the whole Christian system revolves. The line of demarcation between themselves and these coarse sentimentalists must be broad and deep, even though it should exclude those by whom it is run, from all the peculiar and distinctive ground on which the standard of the protestant churches has been erected. There is nothing to dread from such hostility and such enemies. A fine lady visits the United States, and, in loathing against the tobacconised republic, becomes an absolutist. A "double first-class" theologian overhears the Evangelical psalmody, and straightway turns catholic. But Congress will not dissolve at the bidding of the fair; nor will Exeter hall be closed to propitiate the fastidious. The martyrs of disgust and the heroes of revolutions are composed of opposite materials, and are cast in very different moulds. Nothing truly great or formidable was ever yet accomplished, in thought or action, by men whose love for truth was not strong enough to triumph over their dislike of the offensive objects with which it may be associated.

Mr. Froude was the victim of these associations. Nothing escapes his abhorrence which has been regarded with favour by his political or religious antagonists. The Bill for the Abolition of Slavery was recommended to Parliament by an administration more than suspected of Liberalism. The "Witness to Catholic Views," "in whose sentiments as a whole," his editors concur, visits the West Indies, and they are not afraid to publish the following report of his feelings:—"I have felt it a kind of duty to maintain in my mind an habitual hostility to the niggers, and to chuckle over the failures of the new system, as if

these poor wretches concentrated in themselves all the Whiggery, dissent, cant, and abomination that have been ranged on their side." Lest this should pass for a pleasant extravagance, the editors enjoin the reader not to "confound the author's view of the negro cause and of the *abstract negro* with his feelings towards any he should actually meet;" and Professor Tholuck is summoned from Germany to explain how the "originators of error" may lawfully be the objects of a good man's hate, and how it may innocently overflow upon all their clients, kindred and connexions. Mr. Froude's feelings towards the "abstract negro" would have satisfied the learned Professor in his most indignant mood. "I am ashamed," he says, "I cannot get over my prejudices against the niggers."—"Every one I meet seems to me like an incarnation of the whole Anti-Slavery Society, and Fowell Buxton at their head."—"The thing that strikes me as most remarkable in the cut of these niggers is excessive immodesty, a forward stupid familiarity intended for civility, which prejudices me against them worse even than Buxton's cant did. It is getting to be the fashion with every body, even the planters, to praise the emancipation and Mr. Stanley." Mr. Froude, or rather his editors, appear to have fallen into the error of supposing that his profession gave him not merely the right to admonish, but the privilege to scold. Lord Stanley and Mr. Buxton have, however, the consolation of being railed at in good company. Hampden is "hated" with much zeal, though, it is admitted, with imperfect knowledge. Louis Philippe, and his associates of the Three Days, receive the following humane benediction—"I sincerely hope the march of mind in France *may yet prove a bloody one.*" "The election of the wretched B. for —, and that base fellow H. for —, in spite of the exposure," &c. Again, the editors protest against our supposing that this is a playful exercise in the art of exaggeration. "It should be observed," they say, "as in other parts of this volume, that the author used these words on principle, not as abuse, but as expressing matters of fact, as a way of bringing before his own mind things as they are."

Milton, however, is the especial object of Mr. Froude's virtuous abhorrence. He is "a detestable author." Mr. Froude rejoices to learn something of the Puritans, because, as he says, "It gives me a better right to hate Milton, and

accounts for many of the things which most disgusted me in his (not in my sense of the word,) poetry."—"A lady told me yesterday that you wrote the article of Sacred Poetry, &c. I thought it did not come up to what I thought your standard of aversion to Milton." Mr. Froude and his editors must be delivered over to the secular arm under the writ *De Heretico Comburando* for their wilful obstinacy in rejecting the infallible sentence of the fathers and œcumenical counsels of the church poetical, on this article of faith. There is no room for mercy. They did not belong to the audience, meet but few, to whom the immortal addressed himself—to that little company to which alone it is reserved to estimate the powers of such a mind, and reverently to notice its defects. They were of that multitude who have to make their choice between repeating the established creed and holding their peace. Why are free-thinkers in literature to be endured more than in religion? The guilt of Liberalism has clearly been contracted by this rash judgment; and Professor Tholuck being the witness, it exposes the criminals and the whole society of Oriel, nay, the entire University itself, to the diffusive indignation of all who cling to the Catholic faith in poetry.

There are much better things in Mr. Froude's book than the preceding quotations might appear to promise. If given as specimens of his power, they would do gross injustice to a good and able man, a ripe scholar, and a devout Christian. But as illustrations of the temper and opinions of those who now sit in Wycliffe's seat, they are neither unfair nor unimportant. And they may also convince all whom it concerns, that hitherto, at least, Oxford has not given birth to a new race of giants, by whom the Evangelical founders and missionaries of the Church of England will be expelled from their ancient dominion, or the Protestant world excluded from the light of day and the free breath of heaven.

Whenever the time shall be ripe for writing the ecclesiastical history of the last and the present age, a curious chapter may be devoted to the rise and progress of the Evangelical body in England from the days of Whitfield to our own. It will convey many important lessons. It will manifest the irresistible power of the doctrines of the Reformation when proclaimed with honesty and zeal, even though its teachers be unskilled in those studies which are

essential to a complete and comprehensive theology. It will show that infirmities which, not without some reason, offend the more cultivated, and disgust the more fastidious members of the Catholic Church amongst us, are but as the small dust in the balance, when weighed against the mighty energy of those cardinal truths in the defence of which Wycliffe and Luther, Knox and Calvin, Ridley and Latimer, lived and laboured, and died. It may also prove that recondite learning, deep piety and the purest virtue may be all combined in bosoms which are yet contracted by narrow and unsuspected prejudices. But, above all, it may teach mutual charity; admonishing men to listen with kindness and self-distrust even to each other's extravagant claims to an exclusive knowledge of the Divine will, and the exclusive possession of the Divine favour.



## D'AUBIGNÉ'S HISTORY OF THE GREAT REFORMATION.\*

(Edinburgh Review, 1839.)

ENGLISH literature is singularly defective in whatever relates to the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland, and to the lives of the great men by whom it was accomplished. A native of this island who would know any thing to the purpose, of Reuchlin or Hutten, or Luther or Melancthon, of Zuingle, Bucer or Œcolampadius, of Calvin or Farel, must betake himself to other languages than his own. To fill this void in our libraries, is an enterprise which might stimulate the zeal, and establish the reputation, of the ripest student of Ecclesiastical History amongst us. In no other field could he discover more ample resources for narratives of dramatic interest; for the delineation of characters contrasted in every thing except their common design; for exploring the influence of philosophy, arts, and manners, on the fortunes of mankind; and for reverently tracing the footsteps of Divine Providence, moving among the ways and works of men, imparting dignity to events otherwise unimportant, and a deep significance to occurrences in any other view as trivial as a border raid, or the palaver of an African village.

Take, for example, the life of Ulric de Hutten, a noble, a warrior, and a rake; a theologian withal, and a reformer; and at the same time the author, or one of the authors, of a satire to be classed amongst the most effective which the world has ever seen. Had the recreative powers of Walter Scott been exercised on Hutten's story, how familiar would all Christendom have been with the stern Baron of Fran-

\* History of the Great Reformation of the Sixteenth Century, in Germany, Switzerland, &c. By J. H. MERLE D'AUBIGNE, President of the Theological School of Geneva. 8vo. Vol. I. London, 1838.

conia, and Ulric, his petulant boy; with the fat Abbot of Foulde driving the fiery youth by penances and homilies to range a literary vagabond on the face of the earth; with the burgomaster of Frankfort, avenging by a still more formidable punishment the pasquinade which had insulted his civic dignity. How vivid would be the image of Hutten at the siege of Pavia, soothing despair itself by writing his own epitaph; giving combat to five Frenchmen for the glory of Maximilian; and receiving from the delighted Emperor the frugal reward of a poetic crown. Then would have succeeded the court and princely patronage of "the Pope of Mentz," and the camp and castle of the Lord of Sickengen, until the chequered scene closed with Ulric's death-bed employment of producing a satire on his stupid physician. All things were welcome to Hutten; arms and love, theology and debauchery, a disputation with the Thomists, a controversy with Erasmus, or a war to the knife with the dunces of his age. His claim to have written the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, has, indeed, been disputed, though with little apparent reason. It is at least clear that he asserted his own title, and that no other candidate for that equivocal honour united in himself the wit and learning, the audacity and licentiousness, which successively adorn and disfigure that extraordinary collection. Neither is it quite just to exclude the satirist from the list of those who lent a material aid to the Reformation. It is not, certainly, by the heartiest or the most contemptuous laugh that dynasties, whether civil or religious, are subverted; but it would be unfair to deny altogether to Hutten the praise of having contributed by his merciless banter to the successes of wiser and better men than himself. To set on edge the teeth of the Ciceronians by the Latinity of the correspondents of the profound Ortuinus, was but a pleasant jest; but it was something more to confer an immortality of ridicule on the erudite doctors who seriously apprehended, from the study of Greek and Hebrew, the revival at once of the worship of Minerva, and of the rite of circumcision. It was in strict satirical justice, that characters were assigned to these sages in a farce as broad as was ever drawn by Aristophanes or Molière; and which was destitute neither of their riotous mirth, nor even of some of that deep wisdom which it was their pleasure to exhibit beneath that mask.

Much as Luther, himself, *asper, incolumi gravitate jocum tentavit*, he received with little relish these sallies of his facetious ally; whom he not only censured for employing the language of reproach and insult, but, harder still, described as a buffoon. It is, perhaps, well for the dignity of the stern Reformer that the taunt was unknown to the object of it; for, great as he was, Hutten would not have spared him; and as the quiver of few satirists has been stored with keener or more envenomed shafts, so, few illustrious men have exposed to such an assailant a greater number of vulnerable points. But of these, or of his other private habits, little is generally recorded. History having claimed Luther for her own, Biography has yielded to the pretensions of her more stately sister; and the domestic and interior life of the antagonist of Leo and of Charles yet remains to be written. The materials are abundant, and of the highest interest;—a collection of letters scarcely less voluminous than those of Voltaire; the *Colloquia Mensalia*, in some parts of more doubtful authenticity, yet, on the whole, a genuine record of his conversation; his theological writings, a mine of egotisms of the richest ore; and the works of Melancthon, Seckendorf, Cochläus, Erasmus, and many others, who flourished in an age when, amongst learned men, to write and to live were almost convertible terms. The volume whose title-page we have transcribed, is, in fact, an unfinished life of Luther, closing with his appeal from the Pope to a general Council. We have selected it as the most elaborate, from a long catalogue of works on the Reformation, recently published on the continent, by the present inheritors of the principles and passions which first agitated Europe in the beginning of the sixteenth century. By far the most amusing of the series is the collection of *Lutheriana* by M. Michelet, which we are bound to notice with especial gratitude, as affording a greater number of valuable references than all other books of the same kind put together. It was drawn up as a relaxation from those severer studies on which M. Michelet's historical fame depends. But the pastime of some men is worth far more than the labours of the rest; and this compilation has every merit but that of an appropriate title; for an autobiography it assuredly is not, in any of the senses, accurate or popular, of that much abused word. Insulated in our habits and pursuits, not less than in our geographical posi-

tion, it is but tardily that, within the intrenchment of our four seas, we sympathize with the intellectual movements of the nations which dwell beyond them. Many, however, are the motives, of at least equal force in these islands as in the old and new continents of the Christian world, for diverting the eye from the present to the past, from those who would now reform, to those who first reformed, the churches of Europe. Or, if graver reasons could not be found, it is beyond all dispute that the professors of Wittemburg, three hundred years ago, formed a group as much more entertaining than those of Oxford at present, as the contest with Dr. Eck exceeded in interest the squabble with Dr. Hampden.

The old Adam in Martin Luther (a favourite subject of his discourse,) was a very formidable personage; lodged in a bodily frame of surpassing vigour, solicited by vehement appetites, and alive to all the passions by which man is armed for offensive or defensive warfare with his fellows. In accordance with a general law, that temperament was sustained by nerves which shrunk neither from the endurance nor the infliction of necessary pain; and by a courage which rose at the approach of difficulty, and exulted in the presence of danger. A rarer prodigality of nature combined with these endowments an inflexible reliance on the conclusions of his own understanding, and on the energy of his own will. He came forth on the theatre of life another Samson Agonistes "with plain heroic magnitude of mind, and celestial vigour armed;" ready to wage an unequal combat with the haughtiest of the giants of Gath; or to shake down, though it were on his own head, the columns of the proudest of her temples. Viewed in his belligerent aspect, he might have seemed a being cut off from the common brotherhood of mankind, and bearing from on high a commission to bring to pass the remote ends of Divine benevolence, by means appalling to human guilt and to human weakness. But he was reclaimed into the bosom of the great family of man, by bonds fashioned in strength and number proportioned to the vigour of the propensities they were intended to control. There brooded over him a constitutional melancholy, sometimes engendering sadness, but more often giving birth to dreams so wild, that, if vivified by the imagination of Dante, they might have passed into visions as awful and majestic as those of the *Inferno*.

As these mists rolled away, bright gleams of sunshine took their place, and that robust mind yielded itself to social enjoyments, with the hearty relish, the broad humour, and the glorious profusion of sense and nonsense, which betoken the relaxations of those who are for the moment abdicating the mastery, to become the companions of ordinary man. Luther had other and yet more potent spells with which to exorcise the demons who haunted him. He had ascertained and taught that the spirit of darkness abhors sweet sounds not less than light itself; for music, while it chases away the evil suggestions, effectually baffles the wiles of the tempter. His lute, and hand, and voice, accompanying his own solemn melodies, were therefore raised to repel the more vehement aggressions of the enemy of mankind; whose feeble assaults he encountered by studying the politics of a rookery, by assigning to each beautiful creation of his flower-beds an appropriate sylph or genius, by the company of his Catherine de Bora, and the sports of their saucy John and playful Magdalene.

The name of Catherine has long enjoyed a wide but doubtful celebrity. She was a lady of noble birth, and was still young when she renounced the ancient faith, her convent, and her vows, to become the wife of Martin Luther. From this portentous union of a monk and nun, the "obscure men" confidently predicted the birth of Antichrist; while the wits and scholars greeted their nuptials with a thick hail-storm of epigrams, hymns, and dithyrambics, the learned Eccius himself chiming into the loud chorus with an elaborate epithalamium. The bridegroom met the tempest, with the spirit of another Benedict, by a counter-blast of invective and sarcasms, which, afterwards collected under the head of "the Lion and the Ass," perpetuated the memory of this redoubtable controversy. "My enemies," he exclaimed, "triumphed. They shouted, *Io, Io!* I was resolved to show that, old and feeble as I am, I am not going to sound a retreat. I trust I shall do still more to spoil their merriment."

This indiscreet if not criminal marriage, scarcely admitted a more serious defence. Yet Luther was not a man to do any thing which he was not prepared to justify. He had inculcated on others the advantages of the conjugal state, and was bound to enforce his precepts by his example. The war of the peasants had brought re-



proach on the principles of the Reformation; and it was incumbent on him to sustain the minds of his followers, and to bear his testimony to evangelical truth by deeds as well as words. Therefore, it was fit that he should marry a nun: Such is the logic of inclination, and such the presumption of uninterrupted success. "Dr. Ortuinus" himself never lent his venerable sanction to a stranger sophistry, than that which could thus discover in one great scandal an apology for another far more justly offensive.

Catherine was a very pretty woman, if Holbein's portrait may be believed; although even her personal charms have been rudely impugned by her husband's enemies, in grave disquisitions devoted to that momentous question. Better still, she was a faithful and affectionate wife. But there is a no less famous Catherine to whom she bore a strong family resemblance. She brought from her nunnery an anxious mind, a shrewish temper, and great volubility of speech. Luther's arts were not those of Petruccio. With him reverence for woman was at once a natural instinct and a point of doctrine. He observed, that when the first woman was brought to the first man to receive her name, he called her not wife, but mother—"Eve, the mother of all living"—a word, he says, "more eloquent than ever fell from the lips of Demosthenes." So, like a wise and kind-hearted man, when his Catherine prattled he smiled; when she frowned, he playfully stole away her anger, and chided her anxieties with the gentlest soothing. A happier or a more peaceful home was not to be found in the land of domestic tenderness. Yet, the confession must be made, that, from the first to the last, this love-tale is nothing less than a case of *læsa majestas* against the sovereignty of romance. Luther and his bride did not meet on either side with the raptures of a first affection. He had long before sighed for the fair Ave Shonfelden, and she had not concealed her attachment for a certain Jerome Baungartner. Ave had bestowed herself in marriage on a physician of Prussia: and before Luther's irrevocable vows were pledged, Jerome received from his great rival an intimation that he still possessed the heart, and, with common activity, might even yet secure the hand of Catherine. But honest Jerome was not a man to be hurried. He silently resigned his pretensions to his illustrious competitor, who, even in the moment of success,

had the discernment to perceive, and the frankness to avow, that his love was not of a flaming or ungovernable nature.

"Nothing on this earth," said the good Dame Ursula Schweickard, with whom Luther boarded when at school at Eisenach, "is of such inestimable value as a woman's love." This maxim, recommended more, perhaps, by truth than originality, dwelt long on the mind and on the tongue of the Reformer. To have dismissed this or any other text without a commentary would have been abhorrent from his temper; and in one of his letters to Catherine he thus insists on a kindred doctrine, the converse of the first. "The greatest favour of God is to have a good and pious husband, to whom you can intrust your all, your person, and even your life; whose children and yours are the same. Catherine, you have a pious husband who loves you. You are an empress; thank God for it." His conjugal meditations were often in a gayer mood; as, for example,—“If I were going to make love again, I would carve an obedient woman out of marble, in despair of finding one in any other way.”—“During the first year of our marriage she would sit by my side while I was at my books, and, not having any thing else to say, would ask me whether in Prussia the Margrave and the house steward were not always brothers.—Did you say your Pater, Catherine, before you began that sermon? If you had, I think you would have been forbidden to preach.” He addresses her sometimes as my Lord Catherine, or Catherine the Queen, the Empress, the Doctress; or as Catherine the rich and noble Lady of Zeilsdorf, where they had a cottage and a few roods of ground. But as age advanced, these playful sallies were abandoned for the following graver and more affectionate style. “To the gracious Lady Catherine Luther, my dear wife, who vexes herself overmuch, grace and peace in the Lord! Dear Catherine, you should read St. John, and what is said in the Catechism of the confidence to be reposed in God. Indeed you torment yourself as though he were not Almighty, and could not produce new Doctors Martin by the score, if the old doctor should drown himself in the Saal.”—“There is one who watches over me more effectually than thou canst, or than all the angels. He sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty. Therefore be calm.”

There were six children of this marriage; and it is at

once touching and amusing to see with what adroitness Luther contrived to gratify at once his tenderness as a father, and his taste as a theologian. When the brightening eye of one of the urchins round his table confessed the allurements of a downy peach, it was "the image of a soul rejoicing in hope." Over an infant pressed to his mother's bosom, thus moralized the severe but affectionate reformer: "That babe and every thing else which belongs to us is hated by the Pope, by Duke George, by their adherents, and by all the devils. Yet, dear little fellow, he troubles himself not a whit for all these powerful enemies, he gaily sucks the breast, looks round him with a loud laugh, and lets them storm as they like." There were darker seasons, when even theology and polemics gave way to the more powerful voice of nature; nor, indeed, has the deepest wisdom any thing to add to his lamentation over the bier of his daughter Magdalene. "Such is the power of natural affection, that I cannot endure this without tears and groans, or rather an utter deadness of heart. At the bottom of my soul are engraved her looks, her words, her gestures, as I gazed at her in her life-time and on her death-bed. My dutiful, my gentle daughter! Even the death of Christ (and what are all deaths compared to his?) cannot tear me from this thought as it should. She was playful, lovely, and full of love!"

Whatever others may think of these nursery tales, we have certain reasons of our own for suspecting that there is not, on either side of the Tweed, a *Papa* who will not read the following letter, sent by Luther to his eldest boy during the Diet of Augsburg, with more interest than any of all the five "Confessions" presented to the Emperor on that memorable occasion.

"Grace and peace be with thee, my dear little boy! I rejoice to find that you are attentive to your lessons and your prayers. Persevere, my child, and when I come home I will bring you some pretty fairing. I know of a beautiful garden, full of children in golden dresses, who run about under the trees, eating apples, pears, cherries, nuts, and plums. They jump and sing and are full of glee, and they have pretty little horses with golden bridles and silver saddles. As I went by this garden I asked the owner of it who those children were, and he told me that they were the good children, who loved to say their prayers,

and to learn their lessons, and who fear God. Then I said to him, Dear sir, I have a boy, little John Luther; may not he too come to this garden, to eat these beautiful apples and pears, to ride these pretty little horses, and to play with the other children? And the man said, If he is very good, if he says his prayers, and learns his lessons cheerfully he may come, and he may bring with him little Philip and little James. Here they will find fifes and drums and other nice instruments to play upon, and they shall dance and shoot with little crossbows. Then the man showed me in the midst of the garden a beautiful meadow to dance in. But all this happened in the morning before the children had dined; so I could not stay till the beginning of the dance, but I said to the man, I will go and write to my dear little John, and teach him to be good, to say his prayers, and learn his lessons, that he may come to this garden. But he has an Aunt Magdalene, whom he loves very much,—may he bring her with him? The man said, Yes, tell him that they may come together. Be good, therefore, dear child, and tell Philip and James the same, that you may all come and play in this beautiful garden. I commit you to the care of God. Give my love to your Aunt Magdalene, and kiss her for me. From your Papa who loves you,—Martin Luther.

If it is not a sufficient apology for the quotation of this fatherly epistle to say, that it is the talk of Martin Luther, a weightier defence may be drawn from the remark that it illustrates one of his most serious opinions. The views commonly received amongst Christians, of the nature of the happiness reserved in another state of being, for the obedient and faithful in this life, he regarded, if not as erroneous, yet as resting on no sufficient foundation, and as ill adapted to “allure to brighter worlds.” He thought that the enjoyments of heaven had been refined away to such a point of evanescent spirituality as to deprive them of their necessary attraction; and the allegory invented for the delight of little John, was but the adaptation to the thoughts of a child of a doctrine which he was accustomed to inculcate on others, under imagery more elevated than that of drums, crossbows, and golden bridles.

There is but one step from the nursery to the servant's hall; and they who have borne with the parental counsels to little John, may endure the following letter respecting an

aged namesake of his, who was about to quit Luther's family:—

“We must dismiss old John with honour. We know that he has always served us faithfully and zealously, and as became a Christian servant. What have we not given to vagabonds and thankless students who have made a bad use of our money? So we will not be niggardly to so worthy a servant, on whom our money will be bestowed in a manner pleasing to God. You need not remind me that we are not rich. I would gladly give him ten florins, if I had them, but do not let it be less than five. He is not able to do much for himself. Pray help him in any other way you can. Think how this money can be raised. There is a silver cup that might be pawned. Sure I am that God will not desert us. Adieu.”

Luther's pleasures were as simple as his domestic affections were pure. He wrote metrical versions of the Psalms, well described by Mr. Hallam, as holding a middle place between the doggerel of Sternhold and Hopkins, and the meretricious ornaments of the later versifiers of the Songs of David. He wedded to them music of his own, to which the most obtuse ear cannot listen without emotion. The greatest of the sons of Germany was, in this respect, a true child of that vocal land; for such was his enthusiasm for the art that he assigned to it a place second only to that of theology itself. He was also an ardent lover of painting, and yielded to Albert Durer the homage which he denied to Cajetan and Erasmus. His are amongst the earliest works embellished by the aid of the engraver. With the birds of his native country he had established a strict intimacy, watching, smiling, and thus moralizing over their habits. “That little fellow,” he said of a bird going to roost, “has chosen his shelter, and is quietly rocking himself to sleep without a care for to-morrow's lodging, calmly holding by his little twig, and leaving God to think for him.” The following parable, in a letter to Spalatin, is in a more ambitious strain.

“You are going to Augsburg without having taken the auspices, and ignorant when you will be allowed to begin. I, on the other hand, am in the midst of the Comitia, in the presence of illustrious sovereigns, kings, dukes, grandees, and nobles, who are solemnly debating affairs of state, and making the air ring with their deliberations and de-



crees. Instead of imprisoning themselves in those royal caverns which you call palaces they hold their assemblies in the sunshine, with the arch of heaven for their tent, substituting for costly tapestries the foliage of trees, where they enjoy their liberty. Instead of confining themselves in parks and pleasure grounds, they range over the earth to its utmost limits. They detest the stupid luxuries of silk and embroidery, but all dress in the same colour, and put on very much the same looks. To say the truth, they all wear black, and all sing one tune. It is a song formed of a single note, with no variation but what is produced by the pleasing contrast of young and old voices. I have seen and heard nothing of their emperor. They have a supreme contempt for the quadruped employed by our gentry, having a much better method for setting the heaviest artillery at defiance. As far as I have been able to understand their resolutions by the aid of an interpreter, they have unanimously determined to wage war through the whole year against the wheat, oats, and barley, and the best corn and fruits of every kind. There is reason to fear, that victory will attend them every where, for they are a skilful and crafty race of warriors, equally expert in collecting booty by violence and by surprise. It has afforded me great pleasure to attend their assemblies as an idle looker on. The hope I cherish of the triumphs of their valour over wheat and barley, and every other enemy, renders me the sincere and faithful friend of these *patres patriæ*, these saviours of the commonwealth. If I could serve them by a wish, I would implore their deliverance from their present ugly name of Crows. 'This is nonsense, but there is some seriousness in it. It is a jest which helps me to drive away painful thoughts.'

The love of fables, which Luther thus indulged at one of the most eventful eras of his life, was amongst his favourite amusements. Æsop lay on the same table with the book of Psalms, and the two translations proceeded alternately. Except the Bible, he declared that he knew no better book; and pronounced it not to be the work of any single author, but the fruit of the labours of the greatest minds in all ages. It supplied him with endless jests and allusions; as for example,—“The dog in charge of the butcher's tray, unable to defend it from the avidity of other curs, said—Well, then, I may as well have my share of

the meat, and fell-to accordingly; which is precisely what the Emperor is doing with the property of the church."

Few really great men, indeed, have hazarded a larger number of jokes in the midst of a circle of note-taking associates. They have left on record the following amidst many other *memorabilia*:—"God made the Priest. The Devil set about an imitation, but he made the tonsure too large, and produced a Monk." A cup composed of five hoops or rings of glass of different colours circulated at his table. Eisleben, an Antinomian, was of the party. Luther pledged him in the following words:—"Within the second of these rings lie the Ten Commandments; within the next ring the Creed; then comes the Paternoster; the Catechism lies at the bottom." So saying, he drank it off. When Eisleben's turn came, he emptied the cup only down to the beginning of the second ring. "Ah," said Luther, "I knew that he would stick at the Commandments, and therefore would not reach the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, or the Catechism."

It must be confessed, however, that Luther's pleasantries are less remarkable for wit or delicacy than for the union of strong sense and honest merriment. They were the careless, though not inconsiderate sport of a free-spoken man, in a circle where religion and modesty, protected by an inbred reverence, did not seek the doubtful defence of conventional outworks. But pensive thoughts were the more habitual food of his overburdened mind. Neither social enjoyments, nor the tenderness of domestic life, could ever long repel the melancholy which brooded over him. It breaks out in every part of his correspondence, and tinges all his recorded conversation. "Because," he says, "my manner is sometimes gay and joyous, many think that I am always treading on roses. God knows what is in my heart. There is nothing in this life which gives me pleasure: I am tired of it. May the Lord come quickly and take me hence. Let him come to his final judgment—I await the blow. Let him hurl his thunders, that I may be at rest. Forty years more life! I would not purchase Paradise at such a price." Yet, with this lassitude of the world, his contemplations of death were solemn, even to sadness. "How gloriously," said his friend, Dr. Jonas, "does St. Paul speak of his own death. I cannot enter into this." "It appears to me," replied

Luther, "that when meditating on that subject, even St. Paul himself could not have felt all the energy which possessed him when he wrote. I preach, write, and talk about dying, with a greater firmness than I really possess, or than others ascribe to me." In common with all men of this temperament, he was profuse in extolling the opposite disposition. "The birds," he says, "must fly over our heads, but why allow them to roost in our hair?" "Gaiety and a light heart, in all virtue and decorum, are the best medicine for the young, or rather for all. I who have passed my life in dejection and gloomy thoughts, nor catch at enjoyment, come from what quarter it may, and even seek for it. Criminal pleasure, indeed, comes from Satan, but that which we find in the society of the good and pious men is approved by God. Ride, hunt with your friends, amuse yourself in their company. Solitude and melancholy are poison. They are deadly to all, but, above all, to the young."

The sombre character of Luther's mind cannot be correctly understood by those who are wholly ignorant of the legendary traditions of his native land. This remark is made and illustrated by M. Henry Heine, with that curious knowledge of such lore as none but a denizen of Germany could acquire. In the mines of Mansfeld, at Eisenach and Erfurth, the visible and invisible worlds were almost equally populous; and the training of youth was not merely a discipline for the future offices of life, but an initiation into mysteries as impressive, though not quite so sublime, as those of Eleusis. The unearthly inhabitants of every land are near akin to the human cultivators of the soil. The Killkropff of Saxony differed from a fairy or a hamadryad as a Saxon differs from a Frenchman or a Greek; the thin essences by which these spiritual bodies are sustained being distilled according to their various national tastes, from the dews of Hymettus, the light wines of Provence, and the strong beer of Germany. At the fire-side around which Luther's family drew, in his childhood, there gathered a race of imps who may be considered as the presiding genii of the turnspit and the stable; witches expert in the right use of the broomstick, but incapable of perverting it into a locomotive engine; homely in gait, coarse in feature, sordid in their habits, with canine appetites, and superhuman powers, and, for the most part,

eaten up with misanthropy. When, in his twentieth year, Luther for the first time opened the Bible, and read there of spiritual agents, the inveterate enemies of our race, these *spectra* were projected on a mind over which such legends had already exercised an indestructible influence. Satan and his angels crowded upon his imagination, neither as shapeless presences casting their gloomy shadows on the soul, nor as mysterious impersonations of her foul and cruel desires, nor as warriors engaged with the powers of light and love, and holiness, in the silent motionless war of antagonist energies. Luther's devils were a set of athletic, cross-grained, ill-conditioned wretches, with vile shapes and fiendish faces; who, like the monsters of Dame Ursula's kitchen, gave buffet for buffet, hate for hate, and joke for joke. His Satan was not only something less than archangel ruined, but was quite below the society of that Prince of Darkness, whom Mad Tom in *Lear* declares to be a gentleman. Possessing a sensitive rather than a creative imagination, Luther transferred the visionary lore, drawn from these humble sources, to the machinery of the great epic of revelation, with but little change or embellishment; and thus contrived to reduce to the level of very vulgar prose some of the noblest conceptions of inspired poetry.

At the Castle of Wartburg, his Patmos, where he dwelt the willing prisoner of his friendly sovereign, the Reformer chanced to have a plate of nuts at his supper table. How many of them he swallowed, there is, unfortunately, no Boswell to tell; yet, perhaps, not a few—for, as he slept, the nuts, animated as it would seem by the demon of the pantry, executed a sort of waltz, knocking against each other, and against the slumberer's bedstead; when, lo! the staircase became possessed by a hundred barrels rolling up and down, under the guidance, probably, of the imp of the spigot. Yet all approach to Luther's room was barred by chains and by an iron door—vain intrenchments against Satan! He arose, solemnly defied the fiend, repeated the eighth Psalm, and resigned himself to sleep. Another visit from the same fearful adversary at Nuremburg led to the opposite result. The Reformer flew from his bed to seek refuge in society. Once upon a time, Carlostadt, the Sacramentarian, being in the pulpit, saw a tall man enter the church, and take his seat by one of the burgesses of the

town. The intruder then retired, betook himself to the preacher's house, and exhibited frightful symptoms of a disposition to break all the bones of his child. Thinking better of it, however, he left with the boy a message for Carlostadt, that he might be looked for again in three days. It is needless to add that, on the third day, there was an end of the poor preacher, and of his attacks on Luther and Consubstantiation. In the cloisters at Wittemburg, Luther himself heard that peculiar noise which attests the devil's presence. It came from behind a stove, resembling, for all the world, the sound of throwing a fagot on the fire. This sound, however, is not invariable. An old priest, in the attitude of prayer, heard Satan behind him, grunting like a whole herd of swine. "Ah! ha! master devil," said the priest, "you have your deserts. There was a time when you were a beautiful angel, and there you are turned into a rascally hog." The priest's devotions proceeded without further disturbance; "for," observed Luther, "there is nothing the devil can bear so little as contempt." He once saw and even touched a Killkropff or supposititious child. This was at Dessau. The deviling,—for it had no other parent than Satan himself,—was about twelve years old, and looked exactly like any other boy. But the unlucky brat could do nothing but eat. He consumed as much food as four ploughmen. When things went ill in the house, his laugh was to be heard all over it. If matters went smoothly, there was no peace for his screaming. Luther sportively asserts that he recommended the elector to have this scapegrace thrown into the Moldau, as it was a mere lump of flesh without a soul. His visions sometimes assumed a deeper significance, if not a loftier aspect. In the year 1496, a frightful monster was discovered in the Tiber. It had the head of an ass, an emblem of the Pope; for the Church being a spiritual body incapable of a head, the Pope, who had audaciously assumed that character, was fitly represented under this asinine figure. The right hand resembled an elephant's foot, typifying the Papal tyranny over the weak and timid. The right foot was like an ox's hoof, shadowing forth the spiritual oppression exercised by doctors, confessors, nuns, monks, and scholastic theologians; while the left foot armed with griffin's claws, could mean nothing else than the various ministers of the Pope's civil authority. How far Luther believed in the



existence of the monster, whose mysterious significations he thus interprets, it would not be easy to decide. Yet it is difficult to read his exposition, and to suppose it a mere pleasantry. So constantly was he haunted with this midnight crew of devils, as to have raised a serious doubt of his sanity, which even Mr. Hallam does not entirely discountenance. Yet the hypothesis is surely gratuitous. Intense study deranging the digestive organs of a man, whose bodily constitution required vigorous exercise, and whose mind had been early stored with such dreams as we have mentioned, sufficiently explains the restless importunity of the goblins amongst whom he lived. It is easier for a man to be in advance of his age on any other subject than this. It may be doubted whether the nerves of Seneca or Pliny would have been equal to a solitary evening walk by the Lake Avernus. What wonder, then, if Martin Luther was convinced that suicides fall not by their own hands, but by those of diabolical emissaries, who really adjust the cord or point the knife—that particular spots, as, for example, the pool near the summit of the Mons Pilatus, were desecrated to Satan—that the wailings of his victims are to be heard in the howlings of the night wind—or that the throwing a stone into a pond in his own neighbourhood, immediately provoked such struggles of the evil spirit imprisoned below the water, as shook the neighbouring country like an earthquake?

The mental *phantasmagoria* of so illustrious a man are an exhibition to which no one who reveres his name would needlessly direct an unfriendly, or an idle gaze. But the infirmities of our nature often afford the best measure of its strength. To estimate the strength by which temptation is overcome, you must ascertain the force of the propensities to which it is addressed. Amongst the elements of Luther's character was an awe verging towards idolatry, for all things, whether in the works of God or in the institutions of man, which can be regarded as depositories of the Divine power, or as delegates of the Divine authority. From pantheism, the disease of imaginations at once devout and unhallowed, he was preserved in youth by his respect for the doctrines of the church; and, in later life, by his absolute surrender of his own judgment to the text of the sacred canon. But as far as a pantheistic habit of thought and feeling can consist with the most unqualified belief in

the uncommunicable Unity of the Divine nature, such thoughts and feelings were habitual to him. The same spirit which solemnly acknowledged the existence, whilst it abhorred the use, of the high faculties which, according to the popular faith, the foul fiends of earth, and air, and water, at once enjoy and pervert, contemplated with almost prostrate reverence the majesty and the hereditary glories of Rome; and the apostolical succession of her pontiff, with kings and emperors for his tributaries, the Catholic hierarchy as his vicegerents, and the human mind his universal empire. To brave the vengeance of such a dynasty, wielding the mysterious keys which close the gates of hell and open the portals of heaven, long appeared to Luther an impious audacity, of which nothing less than wo, eternal and unutterable, would be the sure and appropriate penalty. For a man of his temperament to hush these superstitious terrors, and to abjure the golden idol to which the adoring eyes of all nations, kindred, and languages were directed, was a self-conquest, such as none but the most heroic minds can achieve; and to which even they are unequal, unless sustained by an invisible but omnipotent arm. For no error can be more extravagant than that which would reduce Martin Luther to the rank of a coarse spiritual demagogue. The deep self-distrust which, for ten successive years, postponed his irreconcilable war with Rome, clung to him to the last; nor was he ever unconscious of the dazzling splendour of the pageantry which his own hand had contributed so largely to overthrow. There is no alloy of affectation in the following avowal, taken from one of his letters to Erasmus:—

“ You must, indeed, feel yourself in some measure awed in the presence of a succession of learned men, and by the consent of so many ages, during which flourished scholars so conversant in sacred literature, and martyrs illustrious by so many miracles. To all this must be added the more modern theologians, universities, bishops, and popes. On their side are arrayed learning, genius, numbers, dignity, station, power, sanctity, miracles, and what not. On mine, Wycliff and Laurentius Valla, and though you forget to mention him, Augustine also. Then comes Luther, a mean man, born but yesterday, supported only by a few friends, who have neither learning, nor genius, nor greatness, nor sanctity, nor miracles. Put them altogether, and they have not wit

enough to cure a spavined horse. What are they? What the wolf said of the nightingale—a voice, and nothing else. I confess it is with reason you pause in such a presence as this. For ten years together I hesitated myself. Could I believe that this Troy, which had triumphed over so many assaults would fall at last? I call God to witness, that I should have persisted in my fears, and should have hesitated until now, if truth had not compelled me to speak. You may well believe that my heart is not rock; and, if it were, yet so many are the waves and storms which have beaten upon it, that it must have yielded when the whole weight of this authority came thundering on my head, like a deluge ready to overwhelm me.”

The same feelings were expressed at a later time in the following words:—

“I daily perceive how difficult it is to overcome long cherished scruples. Oh, what pain it has cost me, though the Scripture is on my side, to defend myself to my own heart for having dared singly to resist the Pope, and to denounce him as Antichrist! What have been the afflictions of my bosom! How often, in the bitterness of my soul, have I pressed myself with the Papist’s argument,—Art thou alone wise? are all others in error? have they been mistaken for so long a time? What if you are yourself mistaken, and are dragging with you so many souls into eternal condemnation? Thus did I reason with myself, till Jesus Christ, by his own infallible word, tranquillized my heart, and sustained it against this argument, as a reef of rocks thrown up against the waves laughs at all their fury.

He who thus acknowledged the influence, while he defied the despotism of human authority, was self-annihilated in the presence of his Maker. “I have learned,” he says, “from the Holy Scriptures that it is a perilous and a fearful thing to speak in the House of God; to address those who will appear in judgment against us, when at the last day we shall be found in his presence; when the gaze of the angels shall be directed to us, when every creature shall behold the Divine Word, and shall listen till He speaks. Truly, when I think of this, I have no wish but to be silent, and to cancel all that I have written. It is a fearful thing to be called to render to God an account of every idle word.” Philip Melancthon occasionally endeavoured by affectionate

applause, to sustain and encourage the mind which was thus bowed down under the sense of unworthiness. But the praise, even of the chosen friend of his bosom, found no echo there. He rejected it, kindly indeed, but with a rebuke so earnest and passionate, as to show that the commendations of him whom he loved and valued most, were unwelcome. They served but to deepen the depressing consciousness of ill desert, inseparable from his lofty conceptions of the duties which had been assigned to him. In Luther, as in other men, the stern and heroic virtues demanded for their support that profound lowliness which might at first appear the most opposed to their development. The eye which often turns inward with self-complacency, or habitually looks round for admiration, is never long or steadfastly fixed on any more elevated object. It is permitted to no man at once to court the applauses of the world, and to challenge a place amongst the generous and devoted benefactors of his species. The enervating spell of vanity, so fatal to many a noble intellect, exercised no perceptible control over Martin Luther. Though conscious of the rare endowments he had received from Providence (of which that very consciousness was not the least important,) the secret of his strength lay in the heartfelt persuasion, that his superiority to other men gave him no title to their commendations, and in his abiding sense of the little value of such praises. The growth of his social affections was unimpeded by self-regarding thoughts; and he could endure the frowns and even the coldness of those whose approving smiles he judged himself unworthy to receive, and did not much care to win. His was not that feeble benevolence which leans for support, or depends for existence, on the sympathy of those for whom it labours. Reproofs, sharp, unsparing, and pitiless, were familiar to his tongue, and to his pen. Such a censure he had directed to the Archbishop of Mentz, which Spalatin, in the name of their common friend and sovereign, the Elector Frederic, implored him to suppress. "No," replied Luther, "in defence of the fold of Christ, I will oppose to the utmost of my power this ravening wolf, as I have resisted others. I send you my book, which was ready before your letter reached me. It has not induced me to alter a word. The question is decided, I cannot heed your objections." They were such, however, as most men would have thought reasonable

enough. Here are some of the words of which neither friend nor sovereign could dissuade the publication. "Did you imagine that Luther was dead? Believe it not. He lives under the protection of that God who has already humbled the Pope, and is ready to begin with the Archbishop of Mentz a game for which few are prepared." To the severe admonition which followed, the princely prelate answered in his own person, in terms of the most humble deference, leaving to Capito, his minister, the ticklish office of remonstrating against the rigour with which the lash had been applied. But neither soothing nor menaces could abate Luther's confidence in his cause, and in himself. "Christianity," he replies, "is open and honest. It sees things as they are, and proclaims them as they are. I am for tearing off every mask, for managing nothing, for extenuating nothing, for shutting the eyes to nothing. that truth may be transparent and unadulterated, and may have a free course. Think you that Luther is a man who is content to shut his eyes if you can but lull him by a few cajoleries?" "Expect every thing from my affection; but reverence, nay tremble for the faith." George, Duke of Saxony, the near kinsman of Frederic, and one of the most determined enemies of the Reformation, not seldom provoked and encountered the same resolute defiance. "Should God call me to Wittemburg, I would go there, though it should rain Duke Georges for nine days together, and each new Duke should be nine times more furious than this." "Though exposed daily to death in the midst of my enemies, and without any human resource, I never in my life despised any thing so heartily as these stupid threats of Duke George, and his associates in folly. I write in the morning fasting, with my heart filled with holy confidence. Christ lives and reigns, and I, too, shall live and reign."

Here is a more comprehensive denunciation of the futility of the attempts made to arrest his course.

"To the language of the Fathers, of men, of angels, and of devils, I oppose neither antiquity nor numbers, but the single word of the Eternal Majesty, even that gospel which they are themselves compelled to acknowledge. Here is my hold, my stand, my resting-place, my glory, and my triumph. Hence I assault Popes, Thomists, Henrycists, Sophists, and all the gates of hell. I little heed the words of men, whatever may have been their sanctity, nor am I



anxious about tradition or doubtful customs. The Word of God is above all. If the Divine majesty be on my side, what care I for the rest, though a thousand Augustines, and a thousand Cyprians, and a thousand such churches as those of Henry, should rise against me? God can neither err nor deceive. Augustine, Cyprian, and all the saints, can err, and have erred."

"At Leipsic, at Augsburg, and at Worms, my spirit was as free as a flower of the field." "He whom God moves to speak, expresses himself openly and freely, careless whether he is alone, or has others on his side. So spake Jeremiah, and I may boast of having done the same. God has not for the last thousand years bestowed on any bishop such great gifts as on me, and it is right that I should extol his gifts. Truly, I am indignant with myself that I do not heartily rejoice and give thanks. Now and then I raise a faint hymn of thanksgiving, and feebly praise Him. Well! live or die, *Domini sumus*. You may take the word either in the genitive or in the nominative case. Therefore, Sir Doctor, be firm."

This buoyant spirit sometimes expressed itself in a more pithy phrase. When he first wrote against Indulgences, Dr. Jerome Schurf said to him, "What are you about? they won't allow it." "What if they *must* allow it?" was the peremptory answer.

The preceding passages, while they illustrate his indestructible confidence in himself as the minister, and in his cause as the behest, of Heaven, are redolent of that unseemly violence and asperity which are attested at once by the regrets of his friends, and the reproaches of his enemies, and his own acknowledgments. So fierce, indeed, and contumelious and withering is his invective, as to suggest the theory, that, in her successive transmigrations, the same fiery soul which in one age breathed the "Divine Philippics," and in another, the "Letters on a Regicide Peace," was lodged in the sixteenth century under the cowl of an Augustinian monk; retaining her indomitable energy of abuse, though condemned to a temporary divorce from her inspiring genius. Yet what she lost in eloquence in her transit from the Roman to the Irishman, this upbraiding spirit more than retrieved in generous and philanthropic ardour, while she dwelt in the bosom of the Saxon. Luther's rage, for it is nothing less—his scurrilities, for they

are no better—are at least the genuine language of passion, excited by a deep abhorrence of imposture, tyranny, and wrong. Through the ebullitions of his wrath may be discovered his lofty self-esteem, but not a single movement of puerile vanity; his cordial scorn for fools and their folly, but not one heartless sarcasm; his burning indignation against oppressors, whether spiritual or secular, unclouded by so much as a passing shade of malignity. The torrent of emotion is headlong, but never turbulent. When we are least able to sympathize with his irascible feelings, it is also least in our power to refuse our admiration to a mind which, when thus torn up to its lowest depths, discloses no trace of envy, selfishness, or revenge, or of any still baser inmate. His mission from on high may be disputed, but hardly his own belief in it. In that persuasion, his thoughts often reverted to the Prophet of Israel mocking the idolatrous priests of Baal, and menacing their still more guilty King; and if the mantle of Elijah might have been borne with a more imposing majesty, it could not have fallen on one better prepared to pour contempt on the proudest enemies of truth, or to brave their utmost resentment.

Is it paradoxical to ascribe Luther's boisterous invective to his inherent reverence for all those persons and institutions, in favour of which wisdom, power, and rightful dominion, are involuntarily presumed? He lived under the control of an imagination susceptible though not creative—of that passive mental sense to which it belongs to embrace, rather than to originate—to fix and deepen our more serious impressions, rather than to minister to the understanding in the search or the embellishment of truth. This propensity, the basis of religion itself in some, of loyalty in others, and of superstition perhaps in all, prepares the feeble for a willing servitude; and furnishes despotism with zealous instruments in men of stronger nerves and stouter hearts. It steeled Dominic and Loyola for their relentless tasks, and might have raised St. Martin of Wittemburg to the honours of canonization; if, in designing him for his arduous office, Providence had not controlled the undue sensibility of Luther's mind, by imparting to him a brother's love for all the humbler members of the family of man, and a filial fear of God, stronger even than his reverence for the powers and principalities of this sublunary world. Between his religious affections and his homage for the

idols of his imagination, he was agitated by a ceaseless conflict. The nice adjustment of such a balance ill suited his impatient and irritable temper; and he assaulted the objects of his early respect with an impetuosity which betrays his secret dread of those formidable antagonists (so he esteemed them) of God and of mankind. He could not trust himself to be moderate. The restraints of education, habit, and natural disposition, could be overborne only by the excitement which he courted and indulged. His long-cherished veneration for those who tread upon the high places of the earth, lent to his warfare with them all the energy of self-denial, quickened by the anxiety of self-distrust! He scourged his lordly adversaries, in the spirit of a flagellant taming his own rebellious flesh. His youthful devotion for "the solemn plausibilities of life," like all other affections obstinately repelled and mortified, reversed its original tendency, and gave redoubled fervour to the zeal with which he denounced their vanity and resisted their usurpation. If these indignant contumelies offended the gentle, the learned, and the wise, they sustained the courage and won the confidence of the multitude. The voice which commands in a tempest must battle with the roar of the elements. In his own apprehension at least, Luther's soul was among lions—the Princes of Germany, and their ministers; Henry the Eighth, and Edward Lee, his chaplain; the Sacramentarians and Anabaptists; the Universities of Cologne and Louvain; Charles and Leo; Adrian and Clement; Papists, Jurists, and Aristotelians; and, above all, the Devils whom his creed assigned to each of these formidable opponents as so many inspiring or ministering spirits. However fierce and indefensible may be his occasional style, history presents no more sublime picture than that of the humble monk triumphing over such adversaries, in the invincible power of a faith before which the present and the visible disappeared, to make way for things unseen, eternal, and remote. One brave spirit encountered and subdued a hostile world. An intellect of no gigantic proportions, seconded by learning of no marvellous compass, and gifted with no rare or exquisite abilities, but invincible in decision and constancy of purpose, advanced to the accomplishment of one great design, with a continually increasing *momentum*, before which all feeble minds retired, and all opposition was dissipated. The

majesty of the contest, and the splendour of the results, may, perhaps, even in our fastidious and delicate age, be received as an apology for such reproofs as the following to the Royal "Defender of the Faith."

"There is much royal ignorance in this volume, but there is also much virulence and falsehood, which belongs to Lee the editor. In the cause of Christ I have trampled under foot the idol of the Roman abomination which had usurped the place of God and the dominion of sovereigns and of the world. Who, then, is this Henry, this Thomist, this disciple of the monster, that I should dread his blasphemies and his fury? Truly he is the Defender of the Church! Yes, of that Church of his which he thus extols—of that prostitute who is clothed in purple, drunk with her debaucheries—of that mother of fornications. Christ is my leader. I will strike with the same blow that Church and the defender with whom she has formed this strict union. They have challenged me to war. Well, they shall have war. They have scorned the peace I offered them. Well, they shall have no more peace. It shall be seen which will first be weary—the Pope or Luther."—"The world is gone mad. There are the Hungarians, assuming the character of the defenders of God himself. They pray in their litanies, *ut nos defensores tuos exaudire digneris*—why do not some of our princes take on them the protection of Jesus Christ, others that of the Holy Spirit? Then, indeed, the Divine Trinity would be well guarded."

The Briefs of Pope Adrian are thus disposed of:—"It is mortifying to be obliged to give such good German in answer to this wretched Latin. But it is the pleasure of God to confound Antichrist in every thing—to leave him neither literature nor language. They say that he has gone mad and fallen into dotage. It is a shame to address us Germans in such Latin as this, and to send to sensible people such a clumsy and absurd interpretation of Scripture."

The Bulls of Pope Clement fare no better. "The Pope tells us in his answer that he is willing to throw open the golden doors. It is long since we opened all doors in Germany. But these Italian Scaramouches have never restored a farthing of the gain they have made by their indulgences, dispensations, and other diabolical inventions.

Good Pope Clement, all your clemency and gentleness won't pass here. We'll buy no more indulgences. Golden doors and bulls, get ye home again. Look to the Italians for payment. They who know ye will buy ye no more. Thanks be to God, we know that they who possess and believe the gospel, enjoy an uninterrupted jubilee. Excellent Pope, what care we for your bulls? You may save your seals and your parchment. They are in bad odour now-a-days."—"Let them accuse me of too much violence. I care not. Hereafter be it my glory that men shall tell how I inveighed and raged against the Papists. For the last ten years have I been humbling myself, and addressing them in none but respectful language. What has been the consequence of all this submission? To make bad worse. These people are but the more furious. Well, since they are incorrigible, as it is vain to hope to shake their infernal purposes by kindness, I will break them, I will pursue them," &c.—"Such is my contempt for these Satans, that were I not confined here, I would go straight to Rome, in spite of the Devil and all these furies." "But," he continues, in a more playful mood, "I must have patience with the Pope, with my boarders, my servants, with Catherine de Bora, and with every body else. In short, I live a life of patience."

At the risk of unduly multiplying these quotations, we must add another, which has been quoted triumphantly by his enemies. It is his answer to the charge of mis-translating the Bible. "The ears of the Papists are too long with their hi! ha!—they are unable to criticise a translation from Latin into German. Tell them that Dr. Martin Luther chooses that it shall be so, and that a Papist and a jack-ass are the same."

We should reprint no small portion of Luther's works before we exhausted the examples which might be drawn from them, of the uproar with which he assailed his antagonists. To the reproaches which this violence drew on him, he rarely condescended to reply. But to his best and most powerful friend, the Elector Frederic, he makes a defence, in which there is some truth and more eloquence. "They say that these books of mine are too keen and cutting. They are right: I never meant them to be soft and gentle. My only regret is, that they cut no deeper. Think of the violence of my enemies, and you must con-



fess that I have been forbearing.”—“All the world exclaims against me, vociferating the most hateful calumnies; and if in my turn, I, poor man, raise my voice, then nobody has been vehement but Luther. In fine, whatever I do or say must be wrong, even should I raise the dead. Whatever they do must be right, even should they deluge Germany with tears and blood.” In his more familiar discourse, he gave another, and perhaps a more accurate account of the real motives of his impetuosity. He purposely fanned the flame of an indignation which he thought virtuous, because the origin of it was so. “I never,” he said, “write or speak so well as when I am in a passion.” He found anger an effectual, and at last a necessary stimulant, and indulged in a liberal or rather in an intemperate use of it.

The tempestuous phase of Luther's mind was not, however, permanent. The wane of it may be traced in his later writings; and the cause of it may be readily assigned. The liberator of the human mind was soon to discover that the powers he had set free were not subject to his control. The Iconoclasts, Anabaptists, and other innovators, however welcome at first as useful, though irregular partisans, brought an early discredit on the victory to which they had contributed. The Reformer's suspicion of these doubtful allies was first awakened by the facility with which they urged their conquests over the established opinions of the Christian world beyond the limits at which he had himself paused. He distrusted their exemption from the pangs and throes with which the birth of his own doctrines had been accompanied. He perceived in them none of the caution, self-distrust, and humility, which he wisely judged inseparable from the honest pursuit of truth. Their claims to an immediate intercourse with heaven appeared to him an impious pretension; for he judged that it is only as attempered through many a gross intervening medium, that Divine light can be received into the human understanding. Carlostadt, one of the professors of Wittenburg, was the leader of the Illuminati at that university. The influence of Luther procured his expulsion to Jena, where he established a printing press. But the maxims of toleration are not taught in the school of successful polemics; and the secular arm was invoked to silence an appeal to the world at large against a new papal authority.

The debate from which Luther thus excluded others he

could not deny to himself; for he shrunk from no inquiry and dreaded no man's prowess. A controversial passage at arms accordingly took place between the Reformer and his refractory pupil. It is needless to add that they separated, each more firmly convinced of the errors of his opponent. The taunt of fearing an open encounter with truth, Luther repelled with indignation and spirit. He invited Carlostadt to publish freely whatever he thought fit, and the challenge being accepted, placed in his hands a florin, as a kind of wager of battle. It was received with equal frankness. The combatants grasped each other's hands, drank mutual pledges in a solemn cup, and parted to engage in hostilities more serious than such greetings might have seemed to augur. Luther had the spirit of a martyr, and was not quite exempt from that of a persecutor. Driven from one city to another, Carlostadt at last found refuge at Basle; and thence assailed his adversary with a rapid succession of pamphlets, and with such pleasant appellatives as "twofold papist," "ally of Antichrist," and so forth. They were answered with equal fertility, and with no greater moderation. "The devil," says Luther, "held his tongue till I won him over with a florin. It was money well laid out. I do not regret it." He now advocated the cause of social order, and exposed the dangers of ignorant innovators, assailing these new enemies with his old weapons. "It will never do to jest with Mr. All the World (*Herr Omnes*.) To keep that formidable person quiet, God has established lawful authority. It is his pleasure that there should be order amongst us here." "They cry out, the Bible! the Bible!—Bibel! Bubel! Babel!" From that sacred source many arguments had been drawn to prove that all good Christians were bound, in imitation of the great Jewish lawgiver, to overthrow and deface the statues with which the Papists had embellished the sacred edifices. Luther strenuously resisted both the opinion and the practice; maintaining that the Scriptures nowhere prohibit the use of images, except such as were designed as a representation or symbol of Deity. But to the war with objects designed (however injudiciously) to aid the imagination, and to enliven the affections, Carlostadt and his partisans united that mysticism which teaches that the mind, thus deprived of all external and sensible supports, should raise itself to a height of spiritual contemplation

and repose, where, all other objects being banished, and all other sounds unheard, and all other thoughts expelled, the Divine Being will directly manifest himself, and disclose his will by a voice silent and inarticulate, and yet distinctly intelligible. Luther handles this sublime nonsense as it well deserved. "The devil," he says (for this is his universal solvent,) "opens his large mouth, and roars out, Spirit! spirit! spirit! destroying the while all roads, bridges, scaling-ladders, and paths, by which spirit can enter; namely, the visible order established by God in holy baptism, in outward forms, and in his own word. They would have you mount the clouds and ride the winds, telling you neither how, nor when, nor where, nor which. All this they leave you to discover for yourself."

Carlostadt was an image-breaker and a mystic, but he was something more. He had adopted the opinion of Zuingli and Œcolampadius on the Holy Communion,—receiving as an emblem, and as nothing else, the sacred elements in which the Roman Catholic Church, after the words of consecration, recognises the very body and blood of the Divine Redeemer. He was, therefore, supported by the whole body of Swiss reformers. Luther, "chained down," as he expresses it, "by the sacred text," to the doctrine of the real presence, had ardently desired to be enfranchised from this opinion. "As often as he felt within himself the strivings of the old Adam, he was but too violently drawn to adopt the Swiss interpretation." "But if we take counsel with reason we shall no longer believe any mystery." He had, however, consulted this dangerous guide too long, thus easily to shake off her company. The text taught him one real presence, his reason assured him of another; and so he required his disciples to admit and believe both. They obeyed, though at the expense of a schism among the reformers, of which it is difficult to say whether it occasioned more distress to themselves, or more exultation to their common enemies.

This is the first and greatest of those "Variations" of which the history has been written with such inimitable eloquence. Nothing short of the most obtuse prejudice could deny to Bossuet the praise of having brought to religious controversy every quality which can render it either formidable or attractive; a style of such transparent perspicuity as would impart delight to the study of the year-books,

if they could be re-written in it; a sagacity which nothing escapes; and a fervour of thought and feeling so intense, as to breathe and burn not only without the use of vehement or opprobrious words, but through a diction invariably calm and simple; and a mass of learning so vast and so perfectly digested as to be visible every where without producing the slightest incumbrance or embarrassment. To quote from Mr. Hallam's History of the Middle Ages:—"Nothing, perhaps, in polemical eloquence is so splendid as the chapter on Luther's theological tenets. The Eagle of Meaux is there truly seen, lordly of form, fierce of eyes, terrible in his beak and claws"—a graphic and not unmerited tribute to the prowess of this formidable adversary. But the triumph which it appears to concede to him may not be so readily acknowledged.

The argument of the "Variations" rests on the postulate, that a religion of divine origin must have provided some resource for excluding uncertainty on every debateable point of belief or practice. But it must be vain to search for this steadfast light amongst those who were at variance on so many vital questions. The required *Ductor Dubitantium* could, therefore, be found only in the venerable form of the Catholic Church, whose oracles, every where accessible and never silent, had, from age to age, delivered to the faithful the same invariable truths in one continuous strain of perfect and unbroken harmony.

Much as the real contrast has been exaggerated by the most subtle disputant of modern times, it would be futile to deny, or to extenuate the glaring inconsistencies of the reformers with each other, and with themselves. Protestantism may well endure an avowal which leaves her foundations unimpaired. Bossuet has disproved the existence of a miracle which no man alleges. He has incontrovertibly established that the laws of nature were not suspended in favour of Luther and his associates. He has shown, with inimitable address and eloquence, that, within the precincts of moral science, human reason must toil in vain for demonstrative certainties; and that, in such studies, they who would adopt the same general results, and co-operate for one common end, must be content to rest very far short of an absolute identity of opinion. But there is a deep and impassable gulf between these premises and the inference deduced from them. The stupendous miracle of a tradi-



tional unanimity for fifteen hundred years amongst the members of the Christian Church, at once unattested by any authentic evidence, and refuted by irresistible proofs, is opposed as much to the whole economy of the moral government of the world, as it is to human experience. It was, indeed, easy to silence dissent by terror; to disguise real differences beneath conventional symbols; to divert the attention of the incurious by a gorgeous pageantry; and to disarm the inquisitive at one time by golden preferments, and at another by specious compromises: and it was easy to allege this timid, or blind, or selfish acquiescence in spiritual despotism, as a general consent to the authority, and as a spontaneous adoption of the tenets of the dominant priesthood. But so soon as men really began to think, it was impossible that they should think alike. When suffrages were demanded, and not acclamations, there was at once an end of unanimity. With mental freedom came doubt, and debate, and sharp dissension. The indispensable conditions of human improvement were now to be fulfilled. It was discovered that religious knowledge, like all other knowledge, and religious agreement, like all other agreement, were blessings which, like all other blessings, must be purchased at a price. Luther dispelled the illusion that man's noblest science may be attained, his first interests secured, and his most sacred duties discharged, except in the strenuous exercise of the best faculties of his nature. He was early taught that they who submit themselves to this divine ordinance are cut off from the intellectual repose which rewards a prostrate submission to human authority; that they must conduct the search of truth through many a bitter disappointment, and many a humiliating retraction, and many a weary strife; and that they must brace their nerves and strain their mental powers to the task, with sleepless diligence,—attended and sustained the while by singleness of purpose, by candour, by hope, by humility, and by devotion. When this severe lesson had been learned, the reformers boldly, nay, passionately, avowed their mutual differences. The imperfect vision, and unsteady gait, of eyes long excluded from the light, and limbs debarred from exercise, drew on them the taunts and contumelies of those whose bondage they had dared to reject. But the sarcasms even of Erasmus, the eloquence even of Bossuet, were hurled at them in vain. Centuries rolled on their



appointed course of controversy, of prejudice, of persecution, and of long suffering. Nor was that sharp conflict endured to no good end. Gradually the religion of the gospel resumed much of the benignant and catholic spirit of the primitive ages. The rights of conscience and the principles of toleration, were acknowledged. Some vehement disputes were consigned to well-merited neglect. The Church of Rome herself silently adopted much of the spirit, whilst anathematizing the tenets, of the Reformers; and if the dominion of peace and charity be still imperfect and precarious, yet there is a brighter prospect of their universal empire than has ever before dawned on the nations of Christendom. The Eagle of Meaux, had he been reserved for the nineteenth century, would have laid aside "the terrors of his beak, the lightnings of his eye," and would have winged his lordly flight to regions elevated far above those over which it is his glory to have spread war and consternation.

These, however, are conclusions which, in Luther's age, were beyond the reach of human foresight. It was at that time supposed that all men might at once freely discuss, and unanimously interpret, the meaning of the inspired volume. The trial of the experiment brought to light many essential variations, but still more in which the verbal exceeded the real difference; and such was, perhaps, the case with the Sacramentarian controversy. The objection to Luther's doctrine of Consubstantiation, was not that it was opposed to the reason of man, nor even that it was contradicted by the evidence of his senses; but that no intelligible meaning could be assigned to any of the combinations of words in which it was expressed. It might be no difficult task to be persuaded that whatever so great a doctor taught, on so high a point of theology, must be a truth;—just as the believers in George Psalmanazer may have been firmly assured of the verity of the statements he addressed to them in the language of Formosa. But the Lutheran doctrine could hardly have been more obscure, if delivered in the Formosan, instead of the Latin or the German tongue. To all common apprehension, it appeared nothing less than the simultaneous affirmation and denial of the very same thing. In this respect, it closely resembled the kindred doctrine of the Church of Rome. Yet who would dare to avow such presumptuous bigotry as to impute to the long

unbroken succession of powerful and astute minds which have adorned the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches, the extravagance of having substituted unmeaning sounds for a definite sense, on so momentous an article of their respective creeds? The consequence may be avoided by a much more rational supposition. It is, that the learned of both communions used the words in which that article is enounced, in a sense widely remote from that which they usually bear. The proof of this hypothesis would be more easy than attractive; nor would it be a difficult, though an equally uninviting office, to show that Zuingle and his followers indulged themselves in a corresponding freedom with human language. The dispute, however, proceeded too rapidly to be overtaken or arrested by definitions; which, had they preceded, instead of following the controversy, might have stifled in its birth many a goodly folio.

The minds of men are rudely called away from these subtleties. Throughout the west of Germany, the peasants rose in a sudden and desperate revolt against their lords, under the guidance of Goetz of the "Iron Hand." If neither animated by the principles, nor guided by the precepts, of the gospel, the insurgents at least avowed their adherence to the party then called Evangelical, and justified their conduct by an appeal to the doctrines of the reformers. Yet this fearful disruption of the bands of society was provoked neither by speculative opinions, nor by imaginary wrongs. The grievances of the people were galling, palpable, and severe. They belonged to that class of social evils over which the advancing light of truth and knowledge must always triumph; either by prompting timely concessions, or by provoking the rebound of the overstrained patience of mankind. Domestic slavery, feudal tenures, oppressive taxation, and a systematic denial of justice to the poor, occupied the first place in their catalogue of injuries: the forest laws and the exaction of small tithes the second. The demand of the right to choose their own religious teachers, may not improbably have been added, to give to their cause the semblance of a less sublunary character; and rather in compliment to the spirit of the times, than from any very lively desire for instructors, who, they well knew, would discourage and rebuke their lawless violence. Such a monitor was Luther. He was at once too conspicuous and too ardent to remain a passive spectator of these tu-

mults. The nobles arraigned him as the author of their calamities. The people invoked him as an arbiter in the dispute. He answered their appeal with more than papal dignity. A poor untitled priest asserted over the national mind of Germany a command more absolute than that of her thousand Princes and their Imperial head. He had little of the science of government, nor, in truth, of any other science. But his mind had been expanded by his studies which give wisdom even to the simple. His understanding was invigorated by habitual converse with the inspired writings, and his soul drunk deeply of their spirit. And therefore it was, that from him Europe first heard those great social maxims which, though they now pass for elementary truths, were then as strange in theory as they were unknown in practice. He fearlessly maintained that the demands of the insurgents were just. He asserted the all important, though obvious truth, that power is confided to the rulers of mankind not to gratify their caprice or selfishness, but as a sacred trust to be employed for the common good of society at large; and he denounced their injustice and rapacity with the same stern vehemence which he had formerly directed against the spiritual tyrants of the world. For, in common with all who have caught the genius as well as the creed of Christianity, his readiest sympathies were with the poor, the destitute, and the oppressed; and, in contemplating the unequal distribution of the good things of life, he was not slowly roused to a generous indignation against those to whom the advantages of fortune had taught neither pity nor forbearance. But it was an emotion restrained and directed by far deeper thoughts than visit the minds of sentimental patriots, or selfish demagogues. He depicted, in his own ardent and homely phrase, the guilt, the folly, and the miseries of civil war. He reminded the people of their ignorance and their faults. He bade them not to divert their attention from these, to scan the errors of their superiors. He drew from the evangelical precepts of patience, meekness and long-suffering, every motive which could calm their agitated passions. He implored them not to dishonour the religion they professed; and showed that subordination in human society was a divine ordinance, designed to promote, in different ways, the moral improvement of every rank, and the general happiness of all.

The authority, the courage, and the pathetic earnestness of the great Reformer were exerted in vain. Oppression, which drives wise men mad, had closed the ears of the German peasantry to the advice even of Martin Luther; and they plunged into a contest more desperate in its character, and more fatal in its results, than any which stains the annals of the empire. He felt, with the utmost keenness, the reproach thus brought unto the Reformation; nor may it be concealed, that at last his voice was raised in terrible indignation against the insurgents by whom his pacific efforts had been defeated and his remonstrances despised. His old antagonist, Carlostadt, was charged with a guilty participation in the revolt; and in his distress appealed to the much-reviled Consubstantialist for protection. It was hardly in human nature, certainly not in Luther's, to reject such a suppliant. The *odium theologicum* is, after all, rather a vituperative than a malignant affection, even its worst type; and Luther possessed, more than most polemics, the faculty of exorcising the Demon of Wrath through the channel of the pen. He placed Carlostadt in safety, defended him from the charge of fostering rebellion, and demanded for him a fair trial and a patient hearing. His preternatural fate has been already noticed.

But a more formidable enemy was at hand. The supremacy of Erasmus in the world of letters was such as no other writer ever lived to enjoy. Literature had then a universal language, and the learned of all nations acknowledged him as their guide and model. In an age of intense mental activity, no other mind was so impatient of repose; at a period when freedom of thought was asserted with all the enthusiasm of new-born hope, he emulated the most sanguine of the insurgents against the ancient dynasties. The restorer, almost the inventor, of the popular interpretation of the scriptures, he was excelled by few, if any, in the more ambitious science of biblical criticism. His philosophy (if in deference to custom it must so be called) was but the application to those inquiries in which the present and future welfare of mankind is chiefly involved, of an admirable good sense—penetrating sophisms under the most specious disguise, and repelling mere verbal subtleties, however imposing their pretensions, or however illustrious their patrons. Alternately a man of the world, and a recluse scholar, he was ever wide



awake to the real business of life; even in those studies which usually conduct the mere prisoners of the cloister into dreamy and transcendental speculations. In his hands, the Latin language was bent to uses of which Cicero himself might have thought it incapable; and without any barbarous innovations, became, almost for the first time, the vehicle of playful banter, and of high and mysterious doctrines, treated in a familiar and easy tone. Of the two imperial virtues, industry and self-denial, the literary character of Erasmus was adorned by the first, much more than by the second. Grasping at universal excellence and immediate renown, he poured out orations, verses, essays, dialogues, aphorisms, biographies, translations, and new editions of the classical writers, with a rapidity which at once dazzled the world, and exhausted himself. Deeply as the impress of his mind was fastened on his own generation, those only of his countless works retain their charm in later times, which he regarded but as the pastime of a few leisure hours. Every one has read the "Colloquies," and admired their gay and graceful exposure of the frauds and credulity of his age. The "Praise of Folly" should never be separated from Holbein's etchings, without which the reader may now and then smile, but hardly laugh. The "Ciceronians" is one of those elaborate pleasantries which give pleasure only to the laborious. For neither as a wit nor as a theologian, nor perhaps even as a critic, does Erasmus rank among master intellects; and in the other departments of literature no one has ventured to claim for him a very elevated station. His real glory is to have opened at once new channels of popular and of abstruse knowledge—to have guided the few, while he instructed the many—to have lived and written for noble ends—to have been surpassed by none in the compass of his learning, or the collective value of his works—and to have prepared the way for a mighty Revolution, which it required moral qualities far loftier than his to accomplish. For the soul of this great man did not partake of the energy of his intellectual faculties. He repeatedly confesses that he had none of the spirit of a martyr; and the acknowledgment is made in the tone of sarcasm, rather than in that of regret. He belonged to that class of actors on the scene of life, who have always appeared as the harbingers of great social changes;—men gifted with the power to discern, and



the hardihood to proclaim, truths of which they want the courage to encounter the infallible results; who outrun their generation in thought, but lag behind it in action; players at the sport of reform so long as reform itself appears at an indefinite distance; more ostentatious of their mental superiority, than anxious for the well-being of mankind; dreaming that the dark page of history may hereafter become a fairy tale, in which enchantment will bring to pass a glorious catastrophe, unbought by intervening strife, and agony, and suffering; and therefore overwhelmed with alarm when the edifice begins to totter, of which their own hands have sapped the foundation. He was a Reformer until the Reformation became a fearful reality; a jester at the bulwarks of the papacy until they began to give way; a propagator of the Scriptures, until men betook themselves to the study and the application of them; depreciating the mere outward forms of religion, until they had come to be estimated at their real value; in short, a learned, ingenious, benevolent, amiable, timid, irresolute man, who, bearing the responsibility, resigned to others the glory of rescuing the human mind from the bondage of a thousand years. The distance between his career and that of Luther was, therefore, continually enlarging, until they at length moved in opposite directions, and met each other with mutual animosity. The Reformer foresaw and deprecated this collision; and Bossuet has condemned as servile the celebrated letter in which Luther endeavoured to avert the impending contest. In common with many of his censures of the great father of the Protestant churches, this is evidently the result of prejudice. It was conceived with tenderness, and expressed with becoming dignity.

“I do not,” he says, “reproach you in your estrangements from us, fearing lest I should hinder the cause which you maintain against our common enemies the Papists. For the same reason, it gives me no displeasure that, in many of your works, you have sought to obtain their favour, or to appease their hostility, by assailing us with undeserved reproaches and sarcasms. It is obvious that God has not given you the energy or the courage requisite for an open and fearless attack on these monsters, nor am I of a temper to exact from you what is beyond your strength.”—“I have respected your infirmity, and that measure of the gifts of God which is in you. None can deny that you

have promoted the cause of literature, thus opening the way to the right understanding of the Scriptures; or that the endowment which you have thus received from God is magnificent and worthy of all admiration. Here is a just cause for gratitude. I have never desired that you should quit your cautious and measured course to enter our camp. Great are the services you render by your genius and eloquence; and as your heart fails you, it is best that you should serve God with such powers as He has given you. My only apprehension is, lest you should permit yourself to be dragged by our enemies to publish an attack upon our doctrines, for then I should be compelled to resist you to the face."—"Things have now reached a point at which we should feel no anxiety for our cause, even though Erasmus himself should direct all his abilities against us. It is no wonder that our party should be impatient of your attacks. Human weakness is alarmed and oppressed by the weight of the name of Erasmus. Once to be lashed by Erasmus is a far different thing from being exposed to the assaults of all the Papists put together."—"I have written all this in proof of my candour, and because I desire that God may impart to you a spirit worthy of your name. If that spirit be withheld, at least let me implore you to remain a mere spectator of our tragedy. Do not join your forces to our enemies. Abstain from writing against me, and I will write nothing against you."

This lofty tone grated on the fastidious ear of the monarch of literature. He watched his opportunity, and inflicted a terrible revenge. To have attacked the doctrines of the Reformation would have been to hazard an unanswerable charge of inconsistency. But Luther, in exploring his path, had lost his way in the labyrinth of the question of free will; and had published opinions which were nothing short of the avowal of absolute fatalism. In a treatise *De Libero Arbitrio*, Erasmus made a brilliant charge on this exposed part of his adversary's position: exhausting all the resources of his sagacity, wit, and learning, to lower the theological character of the founder of the Lutheran Church. The Reformer staggered beneath this blow. For metaphysical debate he was ill prepared—to the learning of his antagonist he had no pretension—and to his wit could oppose nothing but indignant vehemence. His answer, *De Servo Arbitrio*, has

been confessed by his most ardent admirers, to have been but a feeble defence to his formidable enemy. The temper in which he conducted the dispute may be judged from the following example:—"Erasmus, that king of amphibology, reposes calmly on his amphibological throne, cheats us with his ambiguous language, and claps his hands when he finds us entangled amongst his insidious tropes, like beasts of chase fallen into the toils. Then seizing the occasion for his rhetoric, he springs on his captive with loud cries, tearing, scourging, tormenting, and devoting him to the infernals, because, as it pleases him to say, his words have been understood in a calumnious, scandalous and Satanic sense, though it was his own design that they should be so taken. See him come on creeping like a viper," &c. &c.

To the last, the sense of this defeat would appear to have clung to Luther. Accustomed to triumph in theological debate, he had been overthrown in the presence of abashed friends and exulting enemies; and the record of his familiar conversation bears deep traces of his keen remembrance of this humiliation. Many of the contumelious words ascribed to him on this subject, if they really fell from his lips, were probably some of those careless expressions in which most men indulge in the confidence of private life; and which, when quoted with the utmost literal exactness, assume, in books published for the perusal of the world at large, a new meaning, and an undesigned emphasis. But there is little difficulty in receiving as authentic the words he is said to have pronounced when gazing on the picture of Erasmus—that it was, like himself, full of craft and malice; a comment on the countenance of that illustrious scholar, as depicted by Holbein, from which it is impossible altogether to dissent.

The contests with Erasmus and the Sacramentarians had taken place in that debateable land which religion and philosophy each claims for her own. But Luther was now to oppose a revolt not merely against philosophy and religion, but against decency and common sense. Equally astounding and scandalous were the antics which the minds of men performed when, exempt from the control of their ancient prepossessions, they had not as yet been brought into subjection to any other. Throughout the north of Germany and the Netherlands, there were found many

converts to the belief, that a divorce might be effected between the virtues which the Gospel exacts, and those new relations between man and the Author of his being, which it at once creates and reveals; that, in short, it was possible to be at the same time a Christian and a knave. The connexion between this sottish delirium, and the rejection of infant baptism, was an accident, or at most a caprice; and the name of Anabaptist, afterwards borne by so many wise and good men, is unfortunately, though indelibly associated with the crazy rabble who first assumed or received it at Munster. Herman Shapræda, and after him Rothmann, were the first who instructed the inhabitants of that city in these ill-omened novelties; and they quickly gained the authority which any bold and unscrupulous guide may command in times when hereditary creeds have been abandoned by those who want the capacity or the knowledge to shape out new opinions for themselves. He who has not received adult baptism is not a Christian; he who is not a Christian is a Pagan; and it is the duty of the faithful to oppose the enemies of truth by all arms, spiritual or secular, within their reach. Strong in this reasoning, and stronger still in numbers and in zeal, the Anabaptists declared open war, expelled the Catholics and Lutherans from the city, pillaged the churches and convents, and adopted as their watchword the exhortation to repent, with which the Baptist of old had addressed the multitudes who surrounded him in the wilderness of Judea. If the insurgents did no works meet for repentance, they did many to be bitterly repented of. Their success was accompanied by cruelty, and followed by still fouler crimes. John de Matheison, their chief prophet, established a community of goods, and committed to the flames every book except the Bible. John of Leyden, his successor, was a journeyman tailor, and, though at once a rogue and a fanatic, was not without some qualities which might have adorned a better cause. He conducted the defence of the city against the Bishop with as much skill and gallantry as if his accustomed seat had been, not the shopboard, but the saddle of a belted knight. In the Scriptures, which his predecessor had exempted from the general conflagration, he found a sanction for the plurality of wives, and proofs that the sceptre of David had passed into his own hands. Twelve princes, representing the heads of the tribes of Israel, received from



him authority to ascend the thrones of Europe; and apostles were sent to the great cities of Germany to propagate the new faith, and to attest the miracles of which they had been the witnesses. The doctrine they taught was less abstruse than might have been anticipated. It consisted in these propositions:—There have been four prophets: the true are King David and John of Leyden; the false are the Pope and Martin Luther: but Luther is worse than the Pope. While this pithy creed was inculcated without the walls, the most frightful debaucheries, and a strange burlesque on royalty, went on within. The king paraded the city, attended by his queen, and followed by a long train of led horses caparisoned in gold brocade, a drawn sword being borne at his left hand, and a crown and Bible at his right. Seated on a throne in the public square, he received petitions from supplicants prostrate on the earth before him. Then followed impious parodies on the most sacred offices of the Christian worship, and scenes of profligacy which may not be described. To these, ere long, succeeded horrors which rendered the New Jerusalem no inapt antitype of the old. The conquered king expiated his crimes on the scaffold,—enduring protracted and inhuman torments with a firmness which redeems his character from the abhorrence to which it had so many indisputable titles. Yet the story is not without interest. The rapidity with which the contagion of such stupid extravagances was propagated, and the apparent genuineness of the belief which a man of much fortitude and some acuteness at length yielded to the coinage of his own brain, however frequent, are still curious phenomena in the science of mental nosology. From his answers to the interrogatories which attended his trial, it may be inferred that he was perfectly sane. His mind had been bewildered, partly by a depraved imagination and ungoverned appetites, and partly by his encounter with questions too large for his capacity, and with detached sentences from Holy Writ, of which he perceived neither the obvious sense nor the more sublime intimations. The memory of this guilty, presumptuous and unhappy man, is rescued from oblivion by the audacity of his enterprise, and still more by the influence it exerted in arresting the progress of the Reformation.

The reproach, however unmerited, fell heavily on Luther. It is the common fate of all who dare to become



leaders in the war against abuses, whether in religious or political society, to be confounded with the baser sort of innovators, who at once hate their persons, and exaggerate and caricature the principles on which they have acted. For this penalty of rendering eminent services to the world every wise man is prepared, and every brave man endures it firmly, in the belief that a day is coming when his fame will be no longer oppressed by this unworthy association. Luther's faith in the ultimate deliverance of his good name from the obloquy cast on it by the madness of the Anabaptists, has but imperfectly been justified by the event. Long after his name belonged to the brightest page of human history, it found in Bossuet an antagonist as inveterate as Tetzels, more learned than Cajetan, and surpassing Erasmus himself in eloquence and ingenuity. Later still has arisen, in the person of Mr. Hallam, a censor, whose religious opinions, unquestionable integrity, boundless knowledge, and admirable genius, give a fearful weight to his unfavourable judgment of the Father of the Reformation. Neither of these great writers, indeed, countenance the vulgar calumny which would identify the principles of Martin Luther with those of John of Leyden, although both of them arraign him in nearly the same terms, as having adopted and taught the antinomian doctrines of which the Anabaptists exhibited the practical results.

The course we are shaping having brought us within reach of the whirlpools of this interminable controversy, roaring in endless circles over a dark and bottomless abyss, we cannot altogether yield to that natural impulse which would pass them by in cautious silence and with averted eyes. The *Labarum* of Luther was a banner inscribed with the legend "Justification by Faith"—the compendium, the essence, the *Alpha* and the *Omega* of his distinctive creed. Of the many, received or possible interpretations of this enigmatical symbol, that which Bossuet and Mr. Hallam regard as most accordant with the views of the great standard-bearer himself, may be stated in the following terms:—If a man be firmly assured that his sins have been remitted by God, in the exercise of a mercy gratuitous and unmerited as it respects the offender himself, but accorded as the merited reward of the great propitiation, that man stands within the line which, even in this life, separates the objects of the Divine favour from the

objects of the Divine displeasure. We believe this epitome of the Lutheran doctrine to be inaccurate, and, but for the greatness of the names by which it is sanctioned, we should have ventured to add, superficial. In hazarding a different translation of Luther's meaning into the language of the world we live in, we do but oppose one assertion to another, leaving the whole weight of authority on the unavourable side. The appeal ultimately lies to those whose studies have rendered them familiar with the Reformer's writings, and especially with his "Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians," which he was wont affectionately to call his *Catherine de Bora*. It must be conceded that they abound in expressions which, detached from the mass, would more than justify the censure of the historian of the "Literature of the Middle Ages." But no writer would be less fairly judged than Luther by isolated passages. Too impetuous to pause for exact discrimination, too long entangled in scholastic learning to have ever entirely recovered the natural relish for plain common sense, and compelled habitually to move in that turbid polemical region which pure and unrefracted light never visits, Luther, it must be confessed, is intelligible only to the impartial and laborious, and might almost be supposed to have courted the reproaches which he least deserves. Stripped of the technicalities of divinity and of the schools, his *Articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ* may, perhaps, with no material error be thus explained.

Define the word "conviction" as a deliberate assent to the truth of any statement, and the word "persuasion" as the habitual reference to any such truth (real or supposed) as a rule of conduct; and it follows, that we are persuaded of many things of which we are not convinced: which is credulity or superstition. Thus, Cicero was persuaded of the sanctity of the mysteries which he celebrated as one of the College of Augurs. But the author of the *Treatise De Naturâ Deorum* had certainly no corresponding convictions. We are convinced of much of which we are not persuaded, which, in theological language, is a "dead faith." The Marquis of Worcester deliberately assented to the truth, that the expansive force of steam could be applied to propel a vessel through the water; but wanting the necessary "persuasion," he left to others the praise of the discovery. Again, there are many propositions of which

we are at once convinced and persuaded, and this in the Lutheran style is a "living or saving faith."<sup>2</sup> In this sense Columbus believed the true configuration of the earth, and launched his caravels to make known the two hemispheres to each other. It is by the aid of successful experiment engendering confidence; of habit producing facility; and of earnest thoughts quickening the imagination and kindling desire, that our opinions thus ripen into motives, and our theoretical convictions into active persuasion. It is, therefore, nothing else than a contradiction in terms to speak of Christian faith separable from moral virtue! The practical results of that as of any other motive, will vary directly as the intensity of the impulse, and inversely as the number and force of the impediments; but a motive which produces no motion, is the same thing as an attraction which does not draw, or as a propensity which does not incline. Far different as was the style in which Luther enounced his doctrine, the careful study of his writings will, we think, convince any dispassionate man that such was his real meaning. The faith of which he wrote was not a mere opinion, or a mere emotion. It was a mental energy, of slow but stately growth, of which an intellectual assent was the basis; high and holy tendencies the lofty superstructure; and a virtuous life the inevitable use and destination. In his own emphatic words:—"We do not say the sun *ought* to shine, a good tree *ought* to produce good fruit, seven and three *ought* to make ten. The sun shines by its own proper nature, without being bidden to do so; in the same manner the good tree yields its good fruit; seven and three have made ten from everlasting—it is needless to require them to do so hereafter."

If any credit is due to his great antagonist, Luther's doctrine of "Justification" is not entitled to the praise or censure of novelty. Bossuet resents this claim as injurious to the Church of Rome, and as founded on an extravagant misrepresentation of her real doctrines. To ascribe to the great and wise men of whom she justly boasts, or indeed to attribute to any one of sound mind, the dogma or the dream which would deliberately transfer the ideas of the market to the relations between man and his Creator, is nothing better than an ignorant and uncharitable bigotry. To maintain that, till Luther dispelled the illusion, the Christian world regarded the good actions of this life as investing

even him who performs them best, with a *right* to demand from his Maker an eternity of uninterrupted and perfect bliss, is just as rational as to claim for him the detection of the universal error which had assigned to the animal man a place among the quadrupeds. There is in every human mind a certain portion of indestructible common sense. Small as this may be in most of us, it is yet enough to rescue us all, at least when sane and sober, from the stupidity of thinking not only that the relations of creditor and debtor can really subsist between ourselves and Him who made us, but that a return of such inestimable value can be due from Him for such ephemeral and imperfect services as ours. People may talk foolishly on these matters; but no one seriously believes this. Luther slew no such monster, for there were none such to be slain. The error which he refuted was far more subtle and refined than this, and is copiously explained by Hooker, to whose splendid sermon on the subject it is a "good work" to refer any to whom it is unknown.

The celebrated thesis of "Justification by Faith," if really an Antinomian doctrine, was peculiar to Luther and to his followers only in so far as he extricated it from a mass of superstitions by which it had been obscured, and assigned to it the prominence in his system to which it was justly entitled. But if his indignation had been roused against those who had darkened this great truth, they by whom it was made an apology for lewdness and rapine were the objects of his scorn and abhorrence. His attack on the Anabaptists is conceived in terms so vigorous and so whimsical, that it is difficult to resist the temptation to exhibit some extracts. But who would needlessly disturb the mould beneath which lies interred and forgotten a mass of disgusting folly, which in a remote age exhaled a moral pestilence? Resolving all the sinister phenomena of life, by assuming the direct interference of the devil and his angels in the affairs of men, Luther thought that this influence had been most unskillfully employed at Munster. It was a *coup manqué* on the part of the great enemy of mankind. It showed that Satan was but a bungler at his art. The evil one had been betrayed into this gross mistake that the world might be on their guard against the more astute artifices to which he was about to resort:—

"These new theologians did not," he said, "explain



themselves very clearly." "Having hot soup in his mouth, the devil was obliged to content himself with mumbling out *mum mum*, wishing doubtless to say something worse." "The spirit which would deceive the world must not begin by yielding to the fascinations of woman, by grasping the emblems and honours of royalty, still less by cutting people's throats. This is too broad; rapacity and oppression can deceive no one. The real deceit will be practised by him who shall dress himself in mean apparel, assume a lamentable countenance, hang down his head, refuse money, abstain from meat, fly from woman as so much poison, disclaim all temporal authority, and reject all honours as damnable; and who then, creeping softly towards the throne, the sceptre, and the keys, shall pick them up and possess himself of them by stealth. Such is the man who would succeed, who would deceive the angels, and the very elect. This would indeed be a splendid devil, with a plumage more gorgeous than the peacock or the pheasant. But thus impudently to seize the crown, to take not merely one wife, but as many as caprice or appetite suggests—oh! it is the conduct of a mere schoolboy devil, of a devil at his A B C; or rather, it is the true Satan—Satan, the learned and the crafty, but fettered by the hands of God, with chains so heavy that he cannot move. It is to warn us, it is to teach us to fear his chastisements, before the field is thrown open to a more subtle devil, who will assail us no longer with the A B C, but with the real, the difficult text. If this mere *deviling* at his letters can do such things, what will he not do when he comes to act as a reasonable, knowing, skilful, lawyer-like, theological devil?"

These various contests produced in the mind of Luther the effects which painful experience invariably yields, when the search for truth, prompted by the love of truth, has been long and earnestly maintained. Advancing years brought with them an increase of candour, moderation, and charity. He had lived to see his principles strike their roots deeply through a large part of the Cristian world, and he anticipated, with perhaps too sanguine hopes, their universal triumph. His unshaken reliance in them was attested by his dying breath. But he had also lived to witness the defection of some of his allies, and the guilt and folly of others. Prolonged inquiry had disclosed to



him many difficulties which had been overlooked in the first ardour of the dispute, and he had become painfully convinced that the establishment of truth is an enterprise incomparably more arduous than the overthrow of error. His constitutional melancholy deepened into a more habitual sadness—his impetuosity gave way to a more serene and pensive temper—and as the tide of life ebbed with still increasing swiftness, he was chiefly engaged in meditating on those cardinal and undisputed truths on which the weary mind may securely repose, and the troubled heart be still. The maturer thoughts of age could not, however, quell the rude vigour and fearless confidence which had borne him through his early contests. With little remaining fondness or patience for abstruse speculations, he was challenged to debate one of the more subtle points of theology. His answer cannot be too deeply pondered by polemics at large. "Should we not," he said, "get on better in this discussion with the assistance of a jug or two of beer?" The offended disputant retired,—“the devil,” observed Luther, “being a haughty spirit, who can bear any thing better than being laughed at.” This growing contempt for unprofitable questions was indicated by a corresponding decline in Luther’s original estimate of the importance of some of the minor topics in debate with the Church of Rome. He was willing to consign to silence the question of the veneration due to the Saints. He suspended his judgment respecting prayers for the dead. He was ready to acquiesce in the practice of auricular confession, for the solace of those who regarded it as an essential religious observance. He advised Spalatin to do whatever he thought best respecting the elevation of the Host, deprecating only any positive rule on the subject. He held the established ceremonies to be useful, from the impression they left on gross and uncultivated minds. He was tolerant of images in the churches, and censured the whole race of image-breakers with his accustomed vehemence. Even the use of the vernacular tongue in public worship, he considered as a convenient custom, not an indispensable rule. Carlostadt had insisted upon it as essential. “Oh, this is an incorrigible spirit,” replied the more tolerant Reformer; “for ever and for ever positive obligations and sins!”

But while his Catholic spirit thus raised him above the exaggerated estimate of those external things which chiefly

attracted the hostility of narrower minds, his sense of the value of those great truths in which he judged the essence of religion to consist, was acquiring increased intensity and depth. In common with Montaigne and Richard Baxter (names hardly to be associated on any other ground,) he considered the Lord's Prayer as surpassing every other devotional exercise. "It is my prayer," said Luther; "there is nothing like it." In the same spirit, he preferred the Gospel of St. John to all the other sacred books, as containing more of the language of Christ himself. As he felt, so he taught. He practised the most simple and elementary style of preaching. "If," he said, "in my sermons I thought of Melancthon and other doctors, I should do no good; but I speak with perfect plainness for the ignorant, and that satisfies every body. Such Greek, Latin, and Hebrew as I have, I reserve for the learned." "Nothing is more agreeable or useful for a common audience than to preach on the duties and examples of Scripture. Sermons on grace and justification fall coldly on their ears." He taught that good and true theology consisted in the practice, the habit, and the life of the Christian graces—Christ being the foundation. "Such, however," he says, "is not our theology now-a-days. We have substituted for it a rational and speculative theology. This was not the case with David. He acknowledged his sins, and said, *Miserere mei, Domine!*"

Luther's power of composition is, indeed, held very cheap by a judge so competent as Mr. Hallam; nor is it easy to commend his more elaborate style. It was compared by himself to the earthquake and the wind which preceded the still small voice addressed to the prophet in the wilderness; and is so turbulent, copious, and dogmatical, as to suggest the supposition that it was dictated to a class of submissive pupils, under the influence of extreme excitement. Obscure, redundant, and tautologous as these writings appear, they are still redeemed from neglect, not only by the mighty name of their author, but by that all-pervading vitality and downright earnestness which atone for the neglect of all the mere artifices of style; and by that profound familiarity with the sacred oracles, which far more than compensates for the absence of the speculative wisdom which is drawn from lower sources. But the Reformer's lighter and more occasional works not unfre-

quently breathe the very soul of eloquence. His language in these, ranges between colloquial homeliness and the highest dignity,—now condensed into vivid figures, and then diffused into copious amplification,—exhibiting the successive phases of his ardent, melancholy, playful, and heroic character in such rapid succession, and with such perfect harmony, as to resemble the harp of Dryden's *Timotheus*, alternately touched and swept by the hand of the master—a performance so bold and so varied, as to scare the critic from the discharge of his office. The address, for example, to the Swabian insurgents and nobles, if not executed with the skill, is at least conceived in the spirit of a great orator. The universal testimony of all the most competent judges, attests the excellence of his translation of the Bible, and assigns to him, in the literature of his country, a station corresponding to that of the great men to whom James committed the corresponding office in our own.

Bayle has left to the friends of Luther no duty to perform in the defence of his moral character, but that of appealing to the unanswerable reply which his Dictionary contains to the charges preferred against the Reformer by his enemies. One unhappy exception is to be made. It is impossible to read without pain the names of Luther, Melancthon, and Bucer, amongst the subscribers to the address to the Landgrave of Hesse, on the subject of his intended polygamy. Those great but fallible men remind his Highness of the distinction between universal laws and such as admit of dispensation in particular cases. They cannot publicly sanction polygamy. But his Highness is of a peculiar constitution, and is exhorted seriously to examine all the considerations laid before him; yet, if he is absolutely resolved to marry a second time, it is their opinion that he should do so as secretly as possible! Fearful is the energy with which the “Eagle of Meaux” pounces on this fatal error,—tearing to pieces the flimsy pretexts alleged in defence of such an evasion of the Christian code. The charge admits of no defence. To the inference drawn from it against the Reformer's doctrine, every Protestant has a conclusive answer. Whether in faith or in practice, he acknowledges no infallible Head but one.

But we have wandered far and wide from our proper subject. Where, all this while, is the story of Luther's

education, of his visit to Rome, of the sale of indulgences, of the denunciations of Tetzels, of the controversy with Ecci-  
cius, the Diets of Worms and Augsburg, the citations be-  
fore Cajetan and Charles, the papal excommunication, and  
the appeal to a general council? These, and many other  
of the most momentous incidents of the Reformer's life,  
are recorded in M. D'Aubigné's work, from which our at-  
tention has been diverted by matters of less account, but  
perhaps a little less familiar. It would be unpardonable to  
dismiss such a work, with a merely ceremonious notice.  
The absolute merit of this life of Martin Luther is great,  
but the comparative value far greater. In the English lan-  
guage, it has no competitor; and though Melancthon him-  
self was the biographer of his friend, we believe that no  
foreign tongue contains so complete and impressive a nar-  
rative of these events. It is true that M. D'Aubigné nei-  
ther deserves nor claims a place amongst those historians,  
usually distinguished as philosophical. He does not as-  
pire to illustrate the principles which determine or per-  
vade the character, the policy, or the institutions of man-  
kind. He arms himself with no dispassionate skepticism,  
and scarcely affects to be impartial. To tell his tale co-  
piously and clearly, is the one object of his literary ambi-  
tion. To exhibit the actors on the scene of life, as the  
free but unconscious agents of the Divine Will, is the  
higher design with which he writes, to trace the myster-  
ious intervention of Providence in reforming the errors  
and abuses of the Christian Church is his immediate end;  
and to exalt the name of Luther, his labour of love. These  
purposes, as far as they are attainable, are effectually at-  
tained. M. D'Aubigné is a Protestant of the original  
stamp, and a Biographer of the old fashion;—not a calm,  
candid, discriminating weigher and measurer of a great  
man's parts, but a warm-hearted champion of his glory,  
and a resolute apologist even for his errors;—ready to do  
battle in his cause with all who shall impugn or derogate  
from his fame. His book is conceived in the spirit, and  
executed with all the vigour, of Dr. M'Crie's "Life of  
Knox." He has all our lamented countryman's sincerity,  
all his deep research, more skill in composition, and a  
greater mastery of subordinate details; along with the same  
inestimable faculty of carrying on his story from one stage  
to another, with an interest which never subsides, and a

vivacity which knows no intermission. If he displays no familiarity with the moral sciences, he is no mean proficient in that art which reaches to perfection only in the Drama or the Romance. This is not the talent of inventing, but the gift of discerning, incidents which impart life and animation to narrative. For M. D'Aubigné is a writer of scrupulous veracity. He is at least an honest guide, though his prepossessions may be too strong to render him worthy of implicit confidence. They are such, however, as to make him the uncompromising and devoted advocate of those cardinal tenets on which Luther erected the edifice of the Reformation. To the one great article on which the Reformer assailed the Papacy, the eye of the biographer is directed with scarcely less intentness. To this every other truth is viewed as subordinate and secondary; and although, on this favourite point of doctrine M. D'Aubigné's meaning is too often obscured by declamation, yet must he be hailed by every genuine friend of the reformation, as having raised a powerful voice in favour of one of those fundamental truths which, so long as they are faithfully taught and diligently observed, will continue to form the great bulwarks of Christendom against the overweening estimate, and the despotic use, of human authority, in opposition to the authority of the Revealed Will of God.



## LIFE AND TIMES OF RICHARD BAXTER.\*

(Edinburgh Review, 1839.)

THIS publication reminds us of an oversight in omitting to notice the collection of the works of Richard Baxter, edited in the year 1830 by Mr. Orme. It was, in legal phrase, a demand for judgment, in the appeal of the great Nonconformist to the ultimate tribunal of posterity, from the censures of his own age, on himself and his writings. We think that the decision was substantially right, and that, on the whole, it must be affirmed. Right it was, beyond all doubt, in so far as it assigned to him an elevated rank amongst those, who, taking the spiritual improvement of mankind for their province, have found there at once the motive and the reward for labours beneath which, unless sustained by that holy impulse, the utmost powers of our frail nature must have prematurely fainted.

About the time when the high-born guests of Whitehall were celebrating the nuptial revels of Elizabeth and the Elector Palatine, and the visiters of low degree were defraying the cost by the purchase of titles and monopolies, there was living at the pleasant village of Eton Constantine between Wrekin Hill and the Severn, a substantial yeoman, incurious alike about the politics of the empire and the wants of the exchequer. Yet was he not without his vexations. On the green before his door, a Maypole, hung with garlands, allured the retiring congregation to dance out the Sunday afternoon to the sound of fife and tabret, while he, intent on the study of the sacred volume, was greeted with no better names than Puritan, Precisian, and Hypocrite. If he bent his steps to the parish church, venerable as it was, and picturesque, in contempt of all

\* The Practical Works of Richard Baxter, with a Preface, giving some Account of the Author, and of this Edition of his Practical Works; and an Essay on his Genius, Works and Times. 4 vols. 8vo. London, 1838.

styles and orders of architecture, his case was not much mended. The aged and purblind incumbent executed his weekly task with the aid of strange associates. One of them laid aside the flail, and another the thimble, to mount the reading desk. To these succeeded "the excellentest stage player in all the country, and a good gamester, and a good fellow." This worthy having received Holy Orders, forged the like for a neighbour's son, who, on the strength of that title officiated in the pulpit and at the altar. Next in this goodly list came an attorney's clerk, who had "tipped himself into so great poverty," that he had no other way to live but by assuming the pastoral care of the flock at Eton Constantine. Time out of mind, the curate had been *ex officio* the depository of the secular, as well as of the sacred literature of the parish; and to these learned persons our yeoman was therefore fain to commit the education of his only son and namesake, Richard Baxter.

Such, from his tenth to his sixteenth year, were the teachers of the most voluminous theological writer in the English language. Of that period of his life, the only incidents which can now be ascertained are that his love of apples was inordinate, and that on the subject of robbing orchards, he held, in practice at least, the doctrines handed down amongst schoolboys by an unbroken tradition. Almost as barren is the only extant record of the three remaining years of his pupilage. They were spent at the endowed school at Wroxeter, which he quitted at the age of nineteen, destitute of all mathematical and physical science—ignorant of Hebrew—a mere smatterer in Greek, and possessed of as much Latin as enabled him in after life to use it with reckless facility. Yet a mind so prolific, and which yielded such early fruits, could not advance to manhood without much well-directed culture. The Bible which lay on his father's table, formed the whole of the good man's library, and would have been ill-exchanged for the treasures of the Vatican. He had been no stranger to the cares, nor indeed to the disorders of life; and, as his strength declined, it was his delight to inculcate on his inquisitive boy the lessons which inspired wisdom teaches most persuasively, when illustrated by dear-bought experience, and enforced by parental love. For the mental infirmities of the son no better discipline could have been

found. A pyrrhonist of nature's making, his threescore years and ten might have been exhausted in a fruitless struggle to adjudicate between antagonist theories, if his mind had not thus been subjugated to the supreme authority of Holy Writ, by an influence coeval with the first dawn of reason, and associated indissolubly with his earliest and most enduring affections. It is neither the wise nor the good by whom the patrimony of opinion is most lightly regarded. Such is the condition of our existence, that beyond the precincts of abstract science, we must take much for granted, if we would make any advance in knowledge, or live to any useful end. Our hereditary prepossessions must not only precede our acquired judgments, but must conduct us to them. To begin by questioning every thing, is to end by answering nothing; and a premature revolt from human authority is but an incipient rebellion against conscience, reason, and truth. Launched into the ocean of speculative inquiry, without the anchorage of parental instruction and filial reverence, Baxter would have been drawn by his constitutional tendencies into that skeptical philosophy, through the long annals of which no single name is to be found to which the gratitude of mankind has been yielded, or is justly due. He had much in common with the most eminent doctors of that school—the animal frame characterized by sluggish appetites, languid passions, and great nervous energy; the intellectual nature distinguished by subtlety to seize distinctions more than by wit to detect analogies; by the power to dive, instead of the faculty to soar; by skill to analyze subjective truths, rather than by ability to combine them with each other and with objective realities. But what was wanting in his sensitive, and deficient in his intellectual structure, was balanced and corrected by the spiritual elevation of his mind. If not enamoured of the beautiful, nor conversant with the ideal, nor able to grasp the comprehensive and the abstract, he enjoyed that clear mental vision which attends on moral purity—the rectitude of judgment which rewards the subjection of the will to the reason—the loftiness of thought awakened by habitual communion with the source of light—and the earnest stability of purpose inseparable from the predominance of the social above the selfish affections. Skepticism and devotion were the conflicting elements of his internal life; but the radiance from above gra-

dually dispersed the vapours from beneath, and, through half a century of pain and strife, and agitation, he enjoyed that settled tranquillity which no efforts merely intellectual can attain, nor any speculative doubts destroy,—the peace, of which it is said, that it passes understanding.

Baxter was born in 1615, and consequently attained his early manhood amidst events ominous of approaching revolutions. Deep and latent as are the ultimate causes of the continued existence of Episcopacy in England, nothing can be less recondite than the human agency employed in working out that result. Nursed by the Tudors, adopted by the Stuarts, and wedded in her youth to a powerful aristocracy, the Anglican Church retains the indelible stamp of these early alliances. To the great, the learned, and the worldly wise, it has for three centuries afforded a resting-place and a refuge. But a long interval had elapsed before the national temples and hierarchy were consecrated to the nobler end of enlightening the ignorant, and administering comfort to the poor. Rich beyond all Protestant rivalry in sacred literature, the Church of England, from the days of Parker to those of Laud, had scarcely produced any one considerable work of popular instruction. The pastoral care which Burnett depicted, in the reign of William and Mary, was at that time a vision which, though since nobly fulfilled, no past experience had realized. Till a much later time, the alphabet was among the mysteries which the English church concealed from her catechumens. There is no parallel in the annals of any other Protestant State, of so wonderful a concentration, and so imperfect a diffusion of learning and genius, of piety and zeal. The reigns of Whitgift, Bancroft, and Laud, were unmolested by cares so rude as those of evangelizing the artisans and peasantry. Jewel and Bull, Hall and Donne, Hooker and Taylor, lived and wrote for their peers, and for future ages, but not for the commonalty of their own. Yet was not Christianity bereft in England of her distinctive and glorious privilege. It was still the religion of the poor. Amidst persecution, contempt, and penury, the Puritans had toiled and suffered, and had, not rarely, died in their service. Thus in every city, and almost in every village, they who had eyes to see, and ears to hear, might, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, perceive the harbingers of the coming tempest. Thoughtful and resolute men had transferred the

allegiance of the heart from their legitimate, to their chosen leaders; while, unconscious of their danger, the ruling were straining the bonds of authority, in exact proportion to the decrease of their number and their strength. It was when the future pastors of New England were training men to a generous contempt of all sublunary interest for conscience' sake, that Laud, not content to be terrible to the founders of Connecticut and New England, braved an enmity far more to be dreaded than theirs. With a view to the ends to which his life was devoted, his truth and courage would have been well exchanged for the wily and time-serving genius of Williams. Supported by Haylin, Cosins, Montague, and many others, who adopted or exaggerated his own opinions, he precipitated the temporary overthrow of a Church, in harmony with the character, and strong in the affections of the people; upheld by a long line of illustrious names; connected with the whole aristocracy of the realm; and enthusiastically defended by the Sovereign.

Baxter's theological studies were commenced during these tumults, and were insensibly biassed by them. The ecclesiastical polity had reconciled him to Episcopal ordination; but as he read, and listened, and observed his attachment to the established ritual and discipline progressively declined. He began by rejecting the practice of indiscriminate communion. He was dissatisfied with the compulsory subscription to articles, and the baptismal cross. "Deeper thoughts on the point of Episcopacy" were suggested to him by the *et cetera* oath; and these reflections soon rendered him an irreconcilable adversary to the "English Diocesan frame." He distributed the sacred elements to those who would not kneel to receive them, and religiously abjured the surplice. Thus ripe for spiritual censures, and prepared to endure them, he was rescued from the danger he had braved by the demon of civil strife. The Scots in the north, and the Parliament in the south, summoned Charles and Laud to more serious cares than those of enforcing conformity, and left Baxter free to enlarge and to propagate his discoveries.

With liberty of speech and action, his mind was visited by a corresponding audacity of thought. Was there indeed a future life?—Was the soul of man immortal?—Were the Scriptures true?—were the questions which now assaulted and perplexed him. They came not as vexing and impor-



fortunate suggestions, but "under pretence of sober reason," and all the resources of his understanding were summoned to resist the tempter. Self-deception was abhorrent from his nature. He feared the face of no speculative difficulty. Dark as were the shapes which crossed his path, they must be closely questioned; and gloomy as was the abyss to which they led, it was to be unhesitatingly explored. The result needs not to be stated. From a long and painful conflict he emerged victorious, but not without bearing to the grave some scars to mark the severity of the struggle. No man was ever blessed with more profound convictions; but so vast and elaborate was the basis of argumentation on which they rested, that to re-examine the texture, and ascertain the coherence of the materials of which it was wrought, formed the still recurring labour of his whole future life.

While the recluse is engulfed in the vortices of metaphysics, the victims of passion are still urged forward in their wild career of guilt and misery. From the transcendental labyrinths through which Baxter was winding his solitary and painful way, the war recalled him to the stern realities of life. In the immediate vicinity of the earlier military operations, Coventry had become a city of refuge to him, and to a large body of his clerical brethren. They believed, in the simplicity of their hearts, that Essex, Waller, and Cromwell, were fighting the battles of Charles, and that their real object was to rescue the King from the thralldom of the Malignants, and the Church from the tyranny of the Prelatists. "We kept," says Baxter, speaking of himself and his associates, "to our old principles, and thought all others had done so too, except a very few inconsiderable persons. We were unfeignedly for King and Parliament. We believed that the war was only to save the Parliament and kingdom from the Papists and delinquents, and to remove the dividers, that the King might again return to his Parliament, and that no changes might be made in religion, but by the laws which had his free consent. We took the true happiness of King and people, Church and State, to be our end, and so we understood the covenant, engaging both against Papists and schismatics; and when the Court News-Book told the world of the swarms of Anabaptists in our armies, we thought it had been a mere lie, because it was not so with us."

Ontology and scholastic divinity have their charms, and never did man confess them more than Richard Baxter. But the pulse must beat languidly indeed, when the superior fascination of the "tented field" is not acknowledged; nor should it derogate from the reverence which attends his name, to admit that he felt and indulged this universal excitement. Slipping away from Durandus, Bradwardine, Suarez, and Ariminensis, he visited Edgehill and Naseby while the Parliamentary armies still occupied the ground on which they had fought. He found the conquerors armed *cap-à-pie* for spiritual, as well as carnal combats; and to convert the troops from their theological errors, was the duty which, he was assured, had been committed to him by Providence. Becoming accordingly chaplain to Whalley's regiment, he witnessed in that capacity many a skirmish, and was present at the sieges of Bristol, Sherborne, and Worcester. Rupert and Goring proved less stubborn antagonists than the seekers and levellers of the Lieutenant-General's camp; and Baxter was "still employed in preaching, conferring, and still disputing against their confounding errors." The soldiers discoursed as earnestly, and even published pamphlets as copiously as himself. After many an affair of posts, the hostile parties at length engaged in a pitched battle at Amersham in Buckinghamshire. "When the public talking-day came," says Baxter, "I took the reading pew, and Pitchford's cornet and troopers took the gallery. There did the leader of the Chesham men begin, and afterwards Pitchford's soldiers set in; and I alone disputed against them from morning until almost night." Too old a campaigner to retire from the field in the presence of his enemy, "he staid it out till they first rose and went away." The honours of the day were, however, disputed. In the strange book published by Edwards, under his appropriate title of "*Gangræna*," the fortunes of the field were chronicled; and there, as we are informed by Baxter himself, may be read "the abundance of nonsense uttered on the occasion."

Cromwell regarded these polemics with ill-disguised aversion, and probably with secret contempt. He had given Baxter but a cold welcome to the army. "He would not dispute with me at all," is a fact related by the good man with evident surprise; "but he would in good discourse very fluently pour out himself in the extolling of

free grace, which was savoury to those that had right principles, though he had some misunderstanding of free grace himself. He was a man of excellent natural parts for affection and oratory, but not well seen in the principles of his religion; of a sanguine complexion, naturally of such a vivacity, hilarity, and alacrity as another man hath when he hath drunken a cup too much; but naturally, also, so far from humble thoughts of himself, that it was his ruin." The Protector had surrendered his powerful mind to the religious fashions of his times, and never found the leisure or the inclination for deep inquiry into a subject on which it was enough for his purposes to excel in fluent and savoury discourse. Among those purposes, to obtain the approbation of his own conscience was not the least sincere. His devotion was ardent, and his piety genuine. But the alliance between habits of criminal self-indulgence, and a certain kind of theopathy, is but too ordinary a phenomenon. That at each step of his progress, Cromwell should have been deceived and sustained by some sophistry, is the less wonderful, since even now, in retracing his course, it is difficult to ascertain the point at which he first quitted the straight path of duty, or to discover what escape was at length open to him from the web in which he had become involved. There have been many worse, and few greater men. Yet to vindicate his name from the condemnation which rests upon it, would be to confound the distinctions of good and evil as he did, without the apology of being tempted as he was.

Baxter was too profound a moralist to be dazzled by the triumph of bad men, however specious their virtues; or to affect any complacency towards a bad cause, though indebted to it for the only period of serenity which it ever was his lot to enjoy. He had ministered to the forces of the Parliamentary general, but abhorred the regicide and usurper. In his zeal for the ancient constitution, he had meditated a scheme for detaching his own regiment, and ultimately all the generals of the army, from their leader. They were first to be undermined by a course of logic, and then blown up by the eloquence of the preacher. This profound device in the science of theological engineering would have been counterworked by the Lieutenant-General, had he detected it, by methods somewhat less subtle, but certainly not less effective. A fortunate illness defeated the

formidable conspiracy, and restored the projector to his pastoral duties and to peace. Even then, his voice was publicly raised against "the treason, rebellion, perfidiousness, and hypocrisy" of Cromwell, who probably never heard, and certainly never heeded, the denunciations of his former chaplain.

Baxter enjoyed the esteem which he would not repay. He was once invited by the Protector to preach at court. Sermons in those days were very serious things—point-blank shots at the bosoms of the auditory; and Cromwell was not a man to escape or to fear the heaviest pulpit ordinance which could be brought to bear on him. From the many vulnerable points of attack, the preacher selected the crying sin of encouraging sectaries. Not satisfied with the errors of his own days, the great Captain had anticipated those of a later age, and had asserted in their utmost extent the dangerous principles of religious liberty. This latitudinarian doctrine may have been suggested by motives merely selfish; and Baxter, at least, could acknowledge no deeper wisdom in which such an innovation could have had its birth. St. Paul was, therefore, made to testify "against the sin committed by politicians, in maintaining divisions for their own ends, that they might fish in troubled waters." He who now occupied the throne of the Stuarts claimed one prerogative to which even they had never aspired. It was that of controverting the argumentation of the pulpit. His zeal for the conversion of his monitor appears to have been exceedingly ardent. Having summoned him to his presence, "he began by a long tedious speech to me," (the narrative is Baxter's,) "of God's providence in the change of the government, and how God had owned it, and what great things had been done at home and abroad, in the peace with Spain and Holland, &c. When he had wearied us all with speaking thus slowly for about an hour, I told him it was too great a condescension to acquaint me so fully with all these matters, which were above me; but I told him that we took our ancient monarchy to be a blessing, and not an evil to the land; and humbly craved his patience that I might ask him how England had ever forfeited that blessing, and unto whom that forfeiture was made. Upon that question he was awakened into some passion, and then told me that it was no forfeiture, but God had changed it as pleased him; and



then he let fly at the Parliament which thwarted him, and especially by name at four or five of those members who were my chief acquaintances, whom I presumed to defend against his passion, and thus four or five hours were spent."

During this singular dialogue, Lambert fell asleep, an indecorum which, in the court of an hereditary monarch, would have been fatal to the prospects of the transgressor. But the drowsiness of his old comrade was more tolerable to Cromwell than the pertinacity of his former chaplain, against whom he a second time directed the artillery of his logic. On this occasion almost all the Privy Council were present; liberty of conscience being the thesis, Baxter the respondent, and Cromwell assuming to himself the double office of opponent and moderator. "After another slow, tedious speech of his, I told him," says the auto-biographer, "a little of my judgment, and when two of his company had spun out a great deal more of the time in such like tedious, but more ignorant speeches, I told him, that if he would be at the labour to read it, I could tell him more of my mind in writing two sheets than in that way of speaking many days. He received the paper afterwards, but I scarcely believe that he ever read it. I saw that what he learnt must be from himself, being more disposed to speak many hours than hear one, and little heeding what another said when he had spoken himself."

Whatever may have been the faults, or whatever the motives of the Protector, there can be no doubt that under his sway England witnessed a diffusion, till then unknown, of the purest influence of genuine religious principles. The popular historians of that period, from various motives, have disguised or misrepresented the fact; and they who derive their views on this subject from Clarendon or from Hudibras, mistake a caricature for a genuine portrait. To this result, no single man contributed more largely than Baxter himself, by his writings and his pastoral labours. His residence at Kidderminster during the whole of the Protectorate was the sabbath of his life; the interval in which his mind enjoyed the only repose of which it was capable, in labours of love, prompted by a willing heart, and unimpeded by a contentious world.

Good Protestants hold, that the supreme Head of the Church reserves to himself alone to mediate and to reign,



as his incommunicable attributes; and that to teach and to minister are the only offices he has delegated to the pastors of his flock. Wisdom to scale the heights of contemplation, love to explore the depths of wretchedness—a science and a servitude inseparably combined;—the one investigating the relations between man and his Creator, the other busied in the cares of a self-denying philanthropy—such, at least in theory, are the endowments of that sacred institution, which, first established by the fishermen of Galilee, has been ever since maintained throughout the Christian commonwealth. A priesthood, of which all the members should be animated with this spirit, may be expected when angels shall resume their visits to our earth, and not till then. Human agency, even when employed to distribute the best gifts of Providence to man, must still bear the impress of human guilt and frailty. But if there be one object in this fallen world, to which the eye, jaded by its pageantries and its gloom, continually turns with renovated hope, it is to an alliance, such as that which bound together Richard Baxter and the people among whom he dwelt. He, a poor man, rich beyond the dreams of avarice in mental resources, consecrating alike his poverty and his wealth to their service; ever present to guide, to soothe, to encourage, and, when necessary, to rebuke; shrinking from no aspect of misery, however repulsive, nor from the most loathsome forms of guilt which he might hope to reclaim;—the instructor, at once, and the physician, the almoner and the friend, of his congregation. They, repaying his labours of love with untutored reverence; awed by his reproofs, and rejoicing in his smile; taught by him to discharge the most abject duties, and to endure the most pressing evils of life, as a daily tribute to their Divine benefactor; incurious of the novelties of their controversial age, but meekly thronging the altar from which he dispensed the symbols of their mystical union with each other and their common Head; and, at the close of their obscure, monotonous, but tranquil course, listening to the same parental voice, then subdued to the gentlest tones of sympathy, and telling of bright hopes and of a glorious reward. Little was there in common between Kidderminster and the “sweet smiling” Auburn. Still less alike were the “village preacher,” who “ran his godly race,” after the fancy of Oliver Goldsmith, and the “painful preacher,”

whose emaciated form, gaunt visage, and Geneva bands, attested the severity of his studies, and testified against prelatie ascendancy. Deeper yet the contrast between the delicate hues and fine touches of the portrait drawn from airy imagination, and Baxter's catalogue of his weekly catechisings, fasts, and conferences: of his Wednesday meetings and Thursday disputations; and of the thirty helps by which he was enabled to quicken into spiritual life the inert mass of a rude and vicious population. But, truth against fiction, all the world over, in the rivalry for genuine pathos and real sublimity. Ever new and charming, after ten thousand repetitions, the plaintive, playful, melodious poetry bears a comparison to the homely tale of the curate of Kidderminster, like that of the tapestried lists of a tournament with the well-fought field of Roncesvalles. Too prolix for quotation, and perhaps too sacred for our immediate purpose, it records one of those moral conquests which bear their testimony to the existence in the human heart of faculties which, even when most oppressed by ignorance, or benumbed by guilt, may yet be roused to their noblest exercise, and disciplined for their ultimate perfection.

Eventful tidings disturbed these apostolical labours, and but too soon proved how precarious was the tenure of that religious liberty which Baxter at once enjoyed and condemned. With the Protectorate it commenced and ended. The death of Oliver, the abdication of Richard, the revival of the Long Parliament, the reappearance of the ejected members, the assembling of a new House of Commons under the auspices of Monk, and the restoration of the Stuarts, progressively endangered, and at length subverted the edifice of ecclesiastical freedom, which the same strong hand had founded and sustained. Yet the issue for awhile seemed doubtful. The sectarians overrated their own strength, and the Episcopalians exaggerated their own weakness. Infallible and impeccable, the Church of Rome is a Tadmor in the wilderness, miraculously erect and beautiful in the midst of an otherwise universal ruin.

The Church of England, liable to err, but always judging right, capable of misconduct, but never acting wrong, is a still more stupendous exception to the weakness and depravity which in all other human institutions signalizes our common nature. But for this well-established truth, a

hardy skepticism might have ventured to arraign her as an habitual alarmist. If she is "in danger" at this moment, she has been so from her cradle. Puritans and Presbyterians, Arminians and Calvinists, Independents and Methodists, had for three centuries threatened her existence, when at last the matricidal hands of the metropolitan of all England, and of the prelate of England's metropolis, were in our own days irreverently laid on her prebendal stalls. One, "whose bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne," in the presence of all other forms of peril, has on this last fearful omen lost his accustomed fortitude; though even the impending overthrow of the church he adorns, finds his wit as brilliant, and his gaiety as indestructible as of yore. What wonder, then, if the canons expectant of St. Paul's at the Court of Breda, surveyed from that Pisgah the fair land of promise with faint misgivings, that the sons of Anak, who occupied the strongholds, should continue to enjoy the milk and honey of their Palestine? Thousands of intrusive incumbents, on whose heads no episcopal hand had been laid, and whose purity no surplice had ever symbolized, possessed the parsonages and pulpits of either episcopal province. A population had grown up unbaptized with the sign of the cross, and instructed to repeat the longer and shorter catechisms of the Westminster Divines. Thirty thousand armed Covenanters yielded to Monk and his officers a dubious submission. Cudworth and Lightfoot at Cambridge, Wilkins and Wallis at Oxford, occupied and adorned the chairs of the ejected loyalists. The divine right of Episcopacy might yet be controverted by Baxter, Howe, and Owen; and Smectymnus might awaken from his repose in the persons of Marshall, Calamy, and Spurstow. Little marvel, that their eternal charter inspired a less exulting faith than of old in the Bishops who had assembled at Breda; that Hyde and Southampton temporized; or that Charles, impatient of the Protestant heresy in all its forms, and of Christianity itself in all its precepts, lent his royal name to an experiment of which deceit was the basis, and persecution the result.

Liberty of conscience, and a concurrence in any Act of Parliament which, on mature deliberation, should be offered for securing it, were solemnly promised by the King, while yet uncertain of the temper of the Commons he was about to meet. Ten Presbyterian ministers were added

to the list of royal chaplains; and, for once a martyr to the public good, Charles submitted himself to the penalty of assisting at four of their sermons. That with which Baxter greeted him, could not have been recited by the most rapid voice in less than two hours. It is a solemn contrast of the sensual and the spiritual life, without one courtly phrase to relieve his censure of the vices of the great. More soothing sounds were daily falling on the royal ear. The Surplice and the Book of Common Prayer had reappeared at the worship of the Lords and Commons. Heads and fellows of colleges enjoyed a restoration scarcely less triumphant than that of their sovereign. Long dormant statutes, arising from their slumbers, menaced the Nonconformists; and the truth was revealed to the delighted hierarchy, that the Church of England was still enthroned in the affections of the English people—the very type of their national character—the reflection of their calm good sense—of their reverence for hoar authority—of their fastidious distaste for whatever is scenic, impassioned, and self-assuming—of their deliberate preference for solid reason, even when somewhat dull, to mere rhetoric, however animated—of their love for those grave observances and ancient forms which conduct the mind to self-communion, and lay open to the heart its long accumulated treasure of hidden, though profound emotions. Happy if the confidence in her own strength excited by this discovery, had been blended either with the forgiveness and the love which the Gospel teaches; or with the toleration inculcated by human philosophy; or with the prudence which should be derived from a long course of suffering! Twenty-eight disgraceful years had then been blotted from the annals of the Anglican Church, and perhaps from the secular history of England.

The time was yet unripe for avowed retaliation, but wrongs and indignities such as those which the Episcopalians had suffered, were neither to be pardoned nor unavenged. Invited by the King to prepare a scheme of future church government, Baxter and his friends, taking Usher's "Reduction of Episcopacy" as their basis, presented to Charles and the prelates a scheme of ecclesiastical reform. "As to Archbishop Usher's model of government," replied the bishops, "we decline it as not consistent with his other learned discourses on the original of Epis-



copacy and of metropolitans, nor with the King's supremacy in causes ecclesiastical." "Had you read Gerson, Bucer, Parker, Baynes, Salmasius, Blondel, &c.," rejoined Baxter, "you would have seen just reason given for our dissent from the ecclesiastical hierarchy as established in England. You would easily grant that diocesses are too great, if you had ever conscionably tried the task which Dr. Hammond describeth as the bishop's work, or had ever believed Ignatius' and others' ancient descriptions of a bishop's church." Whither this war of words was tending, no bystander could doubt. To maintain the splendour and the powers of Episcopacy, to yield nothing, and yet to avoid the appearance of a direct breach of the royal word, was so glaringly the object of the court, that wilful blindness only could fail to penetrate the transparent veil of "The Declaration" framed by Clarendon with all the astuteness of his profession, and accepted by the Presbyterians, with the eagerness of expiring hope. Baxter was not so deceived. In common with the other heads of his party, he judged the faith of Charles an inadequate security, and refused the proffered mitre of Hereford as an insidious bribe.

There were abundant reasons for this distrust. Thanks for his gracious purposes in favour of the Nonconformists had been presented to the head of the Church by the House of Commons, who immediately afterwards, at the instance of his Majesty's Secretary of State, rejected the very measure which had kindled their gratitude. Three months had scarcely passed since the declaration had issued, when an Order in Council proclaimed the illegality of all religious meetings held without the walls of the parochial churches. The book of Common Prayer and the Statute Book were daily cementing their alliance, the one enlarged by a supplication for "grace carefully and studiously to imitate the example of the blessed saint and martyr" who had now attained the honours of canonization; the other requiring the officers of all corporate and port towns "to take the sacrament of the Lord's Supper;" and to swear "that it is not lawful, upon any pretence whatsoever, to take arms against the King," or against "those commissioned by him."

Amidst these Parliamentary thunders were opened the conferences of the Savoy, which were to reduce to a definite



meaning the declarations of Breda and of Whitehall. It was the scene of Baxter's triumph and defeat—the triumph of his promptitude, subtlety, and boundless resource—the defeat of the last hope he was permitted to indulge, of peace to himself or to the Church of which he was then the brightest ornament. The tactics of popular assemblies form a system of licensed deceit; and their conventional morality tolerates the avowal of the skill by which the antagonist party has been overreached, and even an open exultation in the success of such contrivances. To embarrass the Presbyterians by the course of the discussion, to invent plausible pretexts for delay, and to guide the controversy to an impotent, if not a ludicrous close, were the scarcely concealed objects of the Episcopalians. Opposed to these by the feebler party were the contrivances by which weakness usually seeks to evade the difficulties it cannot stem, and the captiousness which few can restrain when overborne by the superior force of numbers or of authority.

Whoever has seen a Parliament, may easily imagine a Synod. Baxter was the leader of an unpopular opposition,—the Charles Fox of the Savoy, of which Morley was the William Pitt, and Gunning the Henry Dundas. To review the Book of Common Prayer, and “to advise and consult upon the same, and the several objections and exceptions which shall be raised against the same,” was the task assigned by Charles to twelve bishops, nine doctors of divinity, and twenty-one Presbyterian divines. Exalted by the acclamation of the whole Episcopalian party to the head of all human writings, not without some doubts whether it should not rather class with those of the sacred canon, the Book of Common Prayer was pronounced by the bishops, at the opening of the conferences, to be exempt from any errors which they could detect, and incapable of any improvements which they could suggest. They could not therefore advance to the encounter until their antagonists should have unrolled the long catalogue of their hostile criticisms and projected amendments. From such a challenge it was not in Baxter's nature to shrink, though warned by his associates of the motives by which it was dictated, and of the dangers to which it would lead. “Bishop Sheldon,” says Burnet, “saw well enough what the effect would be of obliging them to make all their demands at once, that the number would raise a mighty outcry against

them as a people that could never be satisfied." In fourteen days Baxter had prepared a new liturgy. In a few more he had completed his objections to the former rubric, with an humble petition for peace and indulgence. Fast and thick flew over the field the missiles of theological theses before the closer conflict of oral debate. This was waged in high dialectic latitudes. Take the following example:—"That command" (we quote the Episcopalian *proponitur*) "which enjoins only an act in itself lawful, and no other act whereby an unjust penalty is enjoined, or any circumstance whence directly or *per accidens* any sin is consequent, which the commander ought to provide against, hath in it all things requisite to the lawfulness of a command, and particularly cannot be charged with enjoining an act *per accidens* unlawful, nor of commanding an act under an unjust penalty." As an Indian listens to the war-cry of a hostile tribe, Baxter heard the announcement of this heretical doctrine, and plunged headlong into the fight. Pouring forth his boundless stores of metaphysical, moral, and scholastic speculation, he alternately plunged and soared beyond the reach of ordinary vision—distinguished and qualified, quoted and subtilized, till his voice was drowned "in noise and confusion, and high reflections on his dark and cloudy imagination." Bishop Sanderson, the Moderator, adjudged the palm of victory to his opponent. "Baxter and Gunning" (the words are Burnet's) "spent several days in logical arguing, to the diversion of the town, who looked upon them as a couple of fencers engaged in a dispute that could not be brought to any end." It had, however, reached the only end which the King and his advisers had ever contemplated. An apology had been made for the breach of the royal promise. Henceforth the Presbyterians might be denounced as men whom reason could not convince, and who were therefore justly given up to the coercion of penal laws. To cast on them a still deeper shade of contumacy, some few trifling changes were made in the Rubric by the Convocation. The Church was required to celebrate the martyrdom of the first Charles, and the restoration of the second,—that "most religious and gracious King," (the last epithet with which in the same sentence the monarch was complimented and the Deity invoked;) and, as if still more certainly to exclude from her pale those who had sued in vain for entrance, Bel and the

Dragon, and other worthies of the Apocrypha, were now called to take their stations in her weekly services.

Had Charles been permitted to follow the dictates of his own easy nature, or of his religious predilections, he would (though for precisely opposite reasons) have emulated the zeal of Cromwell for liberty of conscience. He would gladly have secured that freedom to his Roman Catholic subjects; and would still more gladly have relieved himself from the trouble of persecuting the Protestant Dissenters. But the time was still unripe for such hazardous experiments. At the dictation of Clarendon, he was made to assure his Parliament that he was "as much in love with the Book of Common Prayer as they could wish, and had prejudices enough against those who did not love it." Within two years from his return, the depth and sincerity of this affection were attested by the imprisonment of more than four thousand Quakers, and by the promulgation of the Act of Uniformity. Among the two thousand clergymen whom this law excluded from the Church, Baxter was on every account the most conspicuous. He had refused the bishopric of Hereford, and the united interest of Charles and Clarendon had been exerted in vain (so with most elaborate hypocrisy it was pretended) to recover for him a curacy at Kidderminster. He for ever quitted that scene of his apostolic labours; and in the forty-seventh year of his age, bowed down with bodily infirmities, was driven from his home and his weeping congregation, to pass the remainder of his life in loathsome jails or precarious hiding-places; there to achieve, in penury and almost ceaseless pain, works without a parallel in the history of English theological literature, for their extent, or their prodigality of mental resources.

Solitude was not among the aggravations of his lot. Margaret Charlton was a lady of gentle birth, rich in the gifts of nature and of fortune. She dwelt in her mother's house at Kidderminster, where both parent and child found in Baxter their teacher and spiritual guide. "In her youth, pride and romances, and company suitable thereto, did take her up." But sickness came, and he ministered to her anxieties; and health returned, and he led the thanksgiving of the congregation; and there were mental conflicts in which he sustained her, and works of mercy in which he directed her, and notes were made of his sermons, and passages

were transcribed from his consolatory letters, and gradually—but who needs to be told the result? Margaret was no ordinary woman. Her “strangely vivid wit” is celebrated by the admirable John Howe; and her widowed husband, in “The breviary of her life,” has drawn a portrait the original of which it would have been criminal not to love. Timid, gentle, and reserved, and nursed amidst all the luxuries of her age, her heart was the abode of affections so intense, and of a fortitude so enduring, that her meek spirit, impatient of one selfish wish, progressively acquired all the heroism of benevolence, and seemed at length incapable of one selfish fear. In prison, in sickness, in evil report, in every form of danger and fatigue, she was still with unabated cheerfulness at the side of him to whom she had pledged her conjugal faith;—prompting him to the discharge of every duty, calming the asperities of his temper, his associate in unnumbered acts of philanthropy, embellishing his humble home by the little arts with which a cultivated mind imparts its own gracefulness to the meanest dwelling place; and during the nineteen years of their union joining with him in one unbroken strain of filial affiance to the Divine mercy, and of a grateful adoration for the Divine goodness. Her tastes and habits had been moulded into a perfect conformity to his. He celebrates her Catholic charity to the opponents of their religious opinions, and her inflexible adherence to her own; her high esteem of the active and passive virtues of the Christian life, as contrasted with a barren orthodoxy; her noble disinterestedness, her skill in casuistry, her love of music, and her medicinal arts. Peace be to the verses which he poured out not to extol but to animate her devotion. If Margaret was wooed in strains over which Sacharissa would have slumbered, Baxter’s uncouth rhymes have a charm which Waller’s lyrics cannot boast—the charm of purity, and reverence, and truth. The Eloise of Abelard, and the Eloise of Rousseau, revealing but too accurately one of the dark chambers of the human heart, have poisoned the imagination, and rendered it difficult to conceive of such ties as those which first drew together the souls of the Nonconformist minister and his pupil;—he approaching his fiftieth and she scarcely past her twentieth year; he stricken with penury, disease, and persecution, and she in the enjoyment of affluence and of the world’s alluring smiles. It was not in the reign of



Charles the Second, that wit or will were wanting to ridicule, or to upbraid such espousals. Grave men sighed over the weakness of the venerable divine; and gay men disported themselves with so effective an incident in the tragedy of life. Much had the great moralist written upon the benefits of clerical celibacy; for, "when he said so, he thought that he should die a bachelor." Something he wrote as follows, in defence of his altered opinions:—"The unsuitableness of our age, and my former known purposes against marriage and against the conveniency of minister's marriage, who have no sort of necessity, made our marriage the matter of much talk;" but he most judiciously proceeds, "the true opening of her case and mine, and the many strange occurrences which brought it to pass, would take away the wonder of her friends and mine that knew us, and the notice of it would conduce to the understanding of some other passages of our lives. Yet wise friends, by whom I am advised, think it better to omit such personal particularities at this time. Both in her case and in mine there was much extraordinary, which it doth not much concern the world to be acquainted with." Under this apology, it veiled the fact that Margaret herself first felt, or first betrayed the truth, that a sublunary affection had blended itself with their devotional feelings; and that she encouraged him to claim that place in her heart which the holiest of human beings has still left for mere human sympathy. It was an attachment hallowed on either side by all that can give dignity to the passions to which all are alike subject. To her it afforded the daily delight of supporting in his gigantic labours, and of soothing in his unremitted cares, a husband who repaid her tenderness with unceasing love and gratitude. To him it gave a friend whose presence was tranquillity, who tempered by her milder wisdom, and graced by her superior elegance, and exalted by her more confiding piety, whatever was austere, or rude, or distrustful in his rugged character. After all, it must be confessed that the story will not fall handsomely to any niche in the chronicles of romance; though, even in that light, Crabbe or Marmontel would have made something of it. Yet, unsupported by any powers of narrative, it is a tale which will never want its interest, so long as delight shall be felt in contemplating the submission of the sternest and most



powerful minds to that kindly influence which cements and blesses, and which should ennoble human society.

Over the declining years of Baxter's life, friendship, as well as conjugal love, threw a glow of consolation which no man ever needed or ever valued more. His affectionate record of his associates has rescued some of their names from oblivion. Such is the case with "good old Simon Ash, who went seasonably to heaven at the very time he was to be cast out of the church; who, having a good estate, and a very good wife, inclined to entertainments and liberality, kept a house much frequented by ministers, where, always cheerful, without profuse laughter, or levity, and never troubled with doubtings," he imparted to others the gaiety of his own heart, and died as he had lived, "in great consolation and cheerful exercise of faith, molested with no fears or doubts, exceedingly glad of the company of his friends, and greatly encouraging all about him." Such also was "good Mr. James Walton, commonly called the weeping prophet; of a most holy blameless life, and, though learned, greatly averse to controversy and dispute;" a man who had struggled successfully against constitutional melancholy, until troubled with the sad case of the Church and the multitude of ministers cast out, and at his own unserviceableness, he consumed to death."

To the Democritus and Heraclitus of nonconformity, a far greater name succeeds in the catalogue of Baxter's friends. In the village of Acton, Sir Matthew Hale had found an occasional retreat from the cares of his judicial life; and devoted his leisure to science and theology, and to social intercourse with the ejected Nonconformist. In an age of civil strife, he had proposed to himself the example of Atticus, and, like that accomplished person, endeavoured to avert the enmity of the contending parties by the fearless discharge of his duties to all, without ministering to the selfish ends of any. The frugal simplicity of his habits, his unaffected piety and studious pursuits, enabled him to keep this hazardous path with general esteem, though he was more indebted for safety to his unrivalled eminence as a lawyer and a judge. Though Cromwell and Ludlow rebelled against the Papal authority of Westminster Hall, their age lagged far behind them. In the overthrow of all other institutions, the courts in which Fortescue and Coke had explained or invented the imme-

morial customs of England, were still the objects of universal veneration; and the supremacy of the law secured to its sages the homage of the people. Never was it rendered more justly than to Hale. With the exception of Roger North, we remember no historian of that day who does not bear an unqualified testimony to his uprightness, to the surpassing compass of his professional learning, and the exquisite skill with which it was employed. That agreeable, though most prejudiced writer, refuses him not only this, but the still higher praise of spotless patriotism, and ridicules his pretensions as a philosopher and divine. Baxter, an incomparably better judge, thought far otherwise. In the learning in which he himself excelled all others, he assigned a high station to Hale: and has recorded that his "conference, mostly about the immortality of the soul and other philosophical and foundation points, was so edifying, that his very questions and objections did help me to more light than other men's solutions." Differing on those subjects which then agitated society, their minds, enlarged by nobler contemplations, rose far above the controversies of their age; and were united in efforts for their mutual improvement, and for advancing the interests of religion, truth, and virtue. It was a grave and severe, but an affectionate friendship; such as can subsist only between men who have lived in the habitual restraint of their lower faculties, and in the strenuous culture of those powers which they believe to be destined hereafter, and to be ripening now, for an indefinite expansion and an immortal existence.

From such intercourse Baxter was rudely called away. Not satisfied with the rigid uniformity of professed belief and external observances amongst the clergy of the Established Church, Parliament had denounced a scale of penalties, graduated from fine, to banishment to the plantations, against laics who should attend any other form of religious worship, even in private houses, where more than five strangers should be present. At Acton, a personage of no mean importance watched over the ecclesiastical discipline of the parish. "Dr. Ryves, rector of that church and of Hadley, dean of Windsor and of Wolverhampton, and chaplain in ordinary to the King," could not patiently endure the irregularities of his learned neighbour. The Dean indeed officiated by deputy, and his curate was a raw

and ignorant youth; and Baxter (an occasional conformist) was a regular attendant on all the sacred offices. But he refused the Oxford oath, and at his domestic worship there were sometimes found more than the statutable addition to the family circle. Such offences demanded expiation. He was committed to Clerkenwell jail; and, when at length discharged from it, was compelled to seek a new and more hospitable residence. He had his revenge. It was to obtain, through the influence of one of his most zealous disciples, the charter which incorporates the Church of England Society for the Propagation of the Gospel—a return of good for evil for which his name might well displace those of some of the saints in the calendar.

While the plague was depopulating London, and the silenced clergymen were discharging the unenvied office of watching over the multitude appointed to death, the King and Clarendon, at a secure distance from the contagion, were employed in framing the statute which denounced the most rigid punishment against any nonconformist minister who should approach within five miles of any town in England, or of any parish in which he had formerly officiated. Totteridge, a hamlet, round which a circle of ten miles in diameter could be drawn without including any of the residences thus proscribed to Baxter, became his next abode, but was not permitted to be a place of security or rest. His indefatigable pen had produced a paraphrase on the New Testament, where the keen scrutiny of his enemies detected libels, to be refuted only by the logic of the court and prison of the King's Bench. From the records of that court, Mr. Orme has extracted the indictment, which sets forth, that “Richardus Baxter, persona seditiosa et factiosa, pravæ mentis, impiæ, inquietæ, turbulent' disposition' et conversation' ;” —“falso, illicite, injuste, nequit', factiose, seditiose, et irreligiose, fecit, composuit, scripsit quendam falsum, seditiosum, libellosum, factiosum, et irreligiosum librum.” The classical pleader proceeds in a vein of unconscious humour to justify these hard words by the use of the figure called, we believe, a “*scilicet*” by those who now inhabit the ancient abode of the Knights Templars. “It is folly,” says the paraphrase, “to doubt whether there be devils, while devils incarnate dwell amongst us here,” (clericos pred' hujus regni Angl' innuendo.) “What else but devils could make ceremonious

hypocrites,' (clericos pred' innuendo;) "men that preach in Christ's name,' (seipsum R. B. et al' seditiosas et factiosas person' innuendo,) "therefore, are not to be silenced if they do no more harm than good. Dreadful then is the case of men," (episcopos et ministros justitiæ infr' hujus regni Angl' innuendo,) "that silence Christ's faithful ministers," (seipsum R. B. et al' seditiosas et factiosas person' innuendo.)

Ansley and George Stevens were dull fellows compared with the great originals from which they drew. L'Es-trange himself might have taken a lesson in the art of defamation, from this innuendoing special pleader. But the absurdity was crowned by the conduct of the trial. Abhorrence, disgust, indignation, and all other feelings of the sterner kind, gave way to the irresistible sense of the ludicrous, in some parts of the judicial career of Jeffries; and "to be grave exceeds all powers of face," in reading the narrative of this proceeding, which was drawn up by one of the spectators. The judge entered the court with his face flaming, "he snorted and squeaked, blew his nose and clenched his hands, and lifted up his eyes, mimicking their manner, and running on furiously, as he said they used to pray." The ermined buffoon extorted a smile from the nonconformists themselves. Pollexfen, the leading counsel for the defence, gave into the humour, and attempted to gain attention for his argument by a jest. "My Lord," he said, "some will think it a hard measure to stop these men's mouths, and not to let them speak through their noses." "Pollexfen," said Jeffries, "I know you well. You are the patron of the faction; this is an old rogue who has poisoned the world, with his Kidderminster doctrine. He encouraged all the women to bring their bodkins and thimbles, to carry on the war against their King, of ever blessed memory. An old schismatical knave—a hypocritical villain." "My Lord," replied the counsel, "Mr. Baxter's loyal and peaceable spirit, King Charles would have rewarded with a bishopric, when he came in, if he would have conformed." "Ay," said the judge, "we know that; but what ailed the old blockhead, the unthankful villain, that he would not conform? Is he wiser or better than other men? He hath been, ever since, the spring of the faction. I am sure he hath poisoned the world with his linsey-woolsey doctrine, a conceited—stub-



born, fanatical dog." After one counsel, and another, had been overborne by the fury of Jeffries, Baxter himself took up the argument. "My Lord," he said, "I have been so moderate with respect to the Church of England, that I have incurred the censure of many of the Dissenters on that account." "Baxter for Bishops," exclaimed the judge, "is a merry conceit indeed. Turn to it, turn to it!" On this one of the counsel turned to a passage in the libel, which stated, that "great respect is due to those truly called bishops amongst us." "Ay," said Jeffries, "this is your Presbyterian cant, *truly* called to be bishops; that is of himself and such rascals, called the bishops of Kidderminster, and other such places. The bishops set apart by such factious—snivelling Presbyterians as himself; a Kidderminster bishop he means, according to the saying of a late learned author, every parish shall maintain a tythepig metropolitan." Baxter offering to speak again, Jeffries exploded in the following apostrophe. "Richard! Richard! dost thou think here to poison the court? Richard, thou art an old fellow—an old knave; thou hast written books enough to load a cart, every one as full of sedition, I might say treason, as an egg is full of meat. Hadst thou been whipped out of thy writing trade forty years ago, it had been happy. I know that thou hast a mighty party, and I see a great many of the brotherhood in corners, waiting to see what will become of their mighty don, and a doctor of your party at your elbow; but I will crush you all. Come, what do you say for yourself, you old knave—come speak up, what doth he say? I am not afraid of him, or of all the snivelling calves you have got about you,"—alluding to some persons who were in tears at this scene. "Your Lordship need not," said Baxter, "for I'll not hurt you. But these things will surely be understood one day; what fools one sort of Protestants are made, to prosecute the other." Then lifting up his eyes to Heaven, he said, "I am not concerned to answer such stuff, but am ready to produce my writings, in confutation of all this; and my life and conversation are known to many in this nation."

The jury returned a verdict of guilty, and but for the resistance of the other judges, Jeffries would have added whipping through the city to the sentence of imprisonment. It was to continue until the prisoner should have paid five



hundred marks. Baxter was at that time in his 70th year. A childless widower, groaning under the agonies of bodily pain, and reduced by former persecutions to sell all that he possessed; he entered the King's Bench prison in utter poverty, and remained there for nearly two years, hopeless of any other abode on earth. But the hope of a mansion of eternal peace and love raised him beyond the reach of human tyranny. He possessed his soul in patience. Wise and good men resorted to his prison, and brought back greetings to his distant friends, and maxims of piety and prudence. Happy in the review of a well-spent life, and still happier in the prospect of its early close, his spirit enjoyed a calm for which his enemies might have well exchanged their mitres and their thrones. His pen, the faithful companion of his troubles, as of his joys, still plied the Herculean tasks which habit had rendered not merely easy, but delightful to him; and what mattered the gloomy walls or the obscene riot of a jail, while he was free to wander from early dawn to nightfall over the sublime heights of devotion, or through the interminable, but to him not pathless wilderness of psychology? There pain and mortal sickness were unheeded, and his long-lost wife forgotten, or remembered only that he might rejoice in their approaching re-union. The altered policy in the Court restored him for awhile to the questionable advantage of bodily freedom. "At this time," says the younger Calamy, "he talked about another world like one that had been there, and was come as an express from thence to make a report concerning it." But age, sickness, and persecution had done their work. His material frame gave way to the pressure of disease, though, in the language of one of his last associates, "his soul abode rational, strong in faith and hope." That his dying hours were agitated by the doubts which had clouded his earlier days, has been often but erroneously asserted. With manly truth, he rejected, as affectation, the wish for death to which some pretend. He assumed no stoical indifference to pain, and indulged in no unhallowed familiarity on those awful subjects which occupy the thoughts of him whose eye is closing on sublunary things, and is directed to an instant eternity. In profound lowliness, with a settled reliance on the Divine Mercy, repeating at frequent intervals the prayer of the Redeemer, on whom his hopes reposed,

and breathing out benedictions on those who encircled his dying bed, he passed away from a life of almost unequalled toil and suffering, to a new condition of existence, where he doubted not to enjoy that perfect conformity of the human to the Divine will, to which, during his three-score years and ten, it had been his ceaseless labour to attain.

The record of the solitary, rather than of the social hours of a man of letters, must form the staple of his biography. yet he must be a strenuous reader, who should be able, from his own knowledge, to prepare such a record of the fruits of Richard Baxter's solitude. After a familiarity of many years with his writings, it must be avowed, that of the one hundred and sixty-eight volumes comprised in the catalogue of his printed works, there are some which we have never seen, and many with which we can boast but a very slight acquaintance. These, however, are such as (to borrow a phrase from Mr. Hallam) have ceased to belong to men, and have become the property of moths. From the recesses of the library in Red Cross Street, they lower in the sullen majority of the folio age, over the pigmies of this duodecimo generation; the expressive, though neglected monuments of occurrences, which can never lose their place, or their interest, in the history of theological literature.

The English Reformation produced no Luther, Calvin, Zuingle, or Knox—no man who imparted to the national mind the impress of his own character, or the heritage of his religious creed. Our Reformers, Cranmer scarcely excepted, were statesmen rather than divines. Neither he, nor those more properly called the martyrs of the Church of England, ever attempted the stirring appeals to mankind at large, which awakened the echoes of the presses and the pulpits of Germany, Switzerland, and France. From the papal to the royal supremacy—from the legatine to the archiepiscopal power—from the Roman missal to the Anglican liturgy, the transition was easy, and, in many respects, not very perceptible. An ambidexter controversialist, the English Church warred at once with the errors of Rome and of Geneva; until relenting towards her first antagonist, she turned the whole power of her arms against her domestic and more dreaded enemy. To the resources of piety, genius, and learning, were added less legitimate

weapons; and the Puritans underwent confiscation, imprisonment, exile, compulsory silence; every thing, in short, except conviction. When the civil wars unloosed their tongues and gave freedom to their pens, they found themselves without any established standard of religious belief: every question debatable; and every teacher conscience-bound to take his share in the debate. Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, Seekers, Familists, Behmenists, and Quakers, were agreed only in cementing a firm alliance against their common enemies, the Prelatists and Papists. Those foes subdued, they turned against each other, some contending for supremacy, and some for toleration, but all for what they severally regarded or professed to regard as truth. Nor were theirs the polemics of the schools or the cloister. The war of religious opinion was accompanied by the roar of Cromwell's artillery—by the fall of ancient dynasties, and the growth of a military, though forbearing despotism. It was an age of deep earnestness. Frivolous and luxurious men had for awhile retreated to make way for impassioned and high-wrought spirits;—the interpreters at once of the ancient revelations and of the present judgments of Heaven, the monitors of an ungodly world, and the comforters of those who bent beneath the weight of national and domestic calamities. Such were that memorable race of authors to whom is given collectively the name of the Puritan divines; and such, above all the rest, was Richard Baxter. Intellectual efforts of such severity as his, relieved by not so much as one passing smile; public services of such extent, interrupted by no one recorded relaxation; thoughts so sleeplessly intent on those awful subjects, in the presence of which all earthly interests are annihilated, might seem a weight too vast for human endurance; as assuredly it forms an example which few would have the power, and fewer still the will, to imitate. His seventy-five years unbroken by any transient glance at gaiety: his one hundred and-sixty eight volumes, where the fancy never disports herself; a mortal man absorbed in the solemn realities, and absolutely independent of all the illusions of life, appears like a fiction, and a dull one too. Yet it is an exact, and not an uninviting truth.

Never was the alliance of soul and body formed on terms of greater inequality than in Baxter's person. It was like

the compact in the fable, where all the spoils and honours fall to the giant's share, while the poor dwarf puts up with all the danger and the blows. The mournful list of his chronic diseases renders almost miraculous the mental vigour which bore him through exertions resembling those of a disembodied spirit. But his ailments were such as, without affecting his nervous energy, gave repose to his animal appetites, and quenched the thirst for all the emoluments and honours of this sublunary state. Death, though delaying to strike, stood continually before him, ever quickening his attention to that awful presence, by approaching the victim under some new or varied aspect of disease. Under this influence he wrote, and spoke, and acted—a dying man, conversant with the living in all their pursuits, but taking no share in their worldly hopes and fugitive emotions. Every returning day was welcomed and improved, as though it were to be his last. Each sermon might be a farewell admonition to his auditory. The sheets which lay before him were rapidly filled with the first suggestions of his mind in the first words which offered; for to-morrow's sun might find him unable to complete the momentous task. All the graces and the negligences of composition were alike unheeded, for how labour as an artist when the voice of human applause might in a few short hours become inaudible! In Baxter, the characteristics of his age, and of his associates, were thus heightened by the peculiarities of his own physical and mental constitution. Their earnestness passed in him into a profound solemnity; their diligence into an unrelaxing intensity of employment; their disinterestedness into a fixed disdain of the objects for which other men contend. Even the episode of his marriage is in harmony with the rest. He renounced the property with which it would have encumbered him, and stipulated for the absolute command of his precarious and inestimable time. Had this singular concentration of thought and purpose befallen a man of quick sympathies, it would have overborne his spirits, if it had not impaired his reason. But Baxter was naturally stern. Had it overtaken a man of vivid imagination, it would have engendered a troop of fantastic and extravagant day-dreams. But to Baxter's natural vision all objects presented themselves with a hard outline, colourless, with no surrounding atmosphere. Had it been united to a cold and selfish



heart, the result would have been a life of ascetic fanaticism. But his was an enlarged, though a calm philanthropy. His mind, though never averted from the remembrance of his own and of others' eternal doom, was still her own sovereign; diligently examining the foundations and determining the limits of belief; methodizing her opinions with painful accuracy, and expanding them into all their theoretical or practical results, as patiently as ever an analyst explored the depths of the differential calculus. Still every thing was to the purpose. "I have looked," he says, "over Hutton, Vives, Erasmus, Scaliger, Salmasius, Cassaubon, and many other critical grammarians, and all Gruter's critical volumes. I have read almost all the physics and metaphysics I could hear of. I have wasted much of my time among loads of historians, chronologers, and antiquaries. I despise none of their learning—all truth is useful. Mathematics, which I have least of, I find a pretty and manlike sport; but if I have no other kind of knowledge than these, what were my understanding worth? What a dreaming dotard should I be? I have higher thoughts of the schoolmen than Erasmus and our other grammarians had. I much value the method and sobriety of Aquinas, the subtlety of Scotus and Ockum, the plainness of Durandus, the solidity of Ariminensis, the profundity of Bradwardine, the excellent acuteness of many of their followers; of Aureolus, Capreolus, Bannes, Alvarez, Zumel, &c.; of Mayro, Lychetus, Trombeta, Faber, Meurisse, Rada, &c.; of Ruiz, Pennattes, Saurez, Vasquez, &c.; of Hurtado, of Albertinus, of Lud à Dola, and many others. But how loath should I be to take such sauce for my food, and such recreations for my business. The jingling of too much and false philosophy among them often drowns the noise of Aaron's bells. I feel myself much better in Herbert's temple."

Within the precincts of that temple, and to the melody of those bells, he accordingly proceeded to erect the vast monument of his theological works. Their basis was laid in a series of "aphorisms on justification"—an attempt to fix the sense of the sacred volume on those topics which constitute the essential peculiarities of the Christian system. The assaults with which the aphorisms had been encountered were repelled by his "Apology," a large volume in quarto. The "Apology" was, within a few months, re-en-



forced by another quarto, entitled his "Confession of Faith." Between four and five hundred pages of "Disputations" came to the succour of the "Confession." Then appeared four treatises on the "Doctrine of Perseverance," on "Saving Faith," on "Justifying Righteousness," and "on Universal Redemption." Next in order is a folio of seven hundred pages, entitled "Catholic Theology, plain, pure, peaceable, unfolding and resolving all the controversies of the Schoolmen, the Papists and the Protestants. This was eclipsed by a still more ponderous folio in Latin, entitled, "*Methodus Theologiæ Christianæ*," composed, to quote his own words, "in my retirement at Totteridge, in a troublesome, smoky, suffocating room, in the midst of daily pains of sciatica, and many worse." After laying down the nature of Deity, and all things in general, he discloses all the relations, eternal and historical, between God and man, with all the abstract truths, and all the moral obligations deducible from them;—detecting the universal presence of the Trinity, not in the Divine Being only, but in all things psychological and material which flow from the great fountain of life. With an "End of Doctrinal Controversies,"—a title, he observes, not intended as a prognostic, but as didactical and corrective—terminated his efforts to close up the mighty questions which touch on man's highest hopes and interests. He had thrown upon them such an incredible multitude and variety of cross lights, as effectually to dazzle any intellectual vision less aquiline than his own.

His next enterprise was to win mankind to religious concord. A progeny of twelve books, most of them of considerable volume, attest his zeal in this arduous cause. Blessed, we are told, are the peacemakers; but the benediction is unaccompanied with the promise of tranquillity. He found, indeed, a patron in "His Highness, Richard Lord Protector," whose rule he acknowledged as lawful, though he had denied the authority of his father. Addressing that wise and amiable man, "I observe," he says, that the nation generally rejoice in your peaceable entrance upon the government. Many are persuaded that you have been strangely kept from participating in any of our late bloody contentions, that God might make you the healer of our breaches, and employ you in that temple work which David himself might not be honoured with, though it was

in his mind, because he shed blood abundantly, and made great wars." Stronger minds and less gentle hearts than that of Richard repelled with natural indignation counsels which rebuked all the contending parties. Amongst these was "one Malpas, an old scandalous minister," "and Edward Bagshawe, a young man who had written formerly against monarchy, and afterwards against Bishop Morley, and being of a resolute Roman spirit, was sent first to the Tower, and then lay in a horrid dungeon;" and who wrote a book "full of untruths, which the furious temerarious man did utter out of the rashness of his mind." In his dungeon, poor Bagshawe died, and Baxter closes the debate with tenderness and pathos. "While we wrangle here in the dark, we are dying, and passing to the world that will decide all our controversies, and the safest passage thither is by peaceable holiness." Dr. Owen, one of the foremost in the first rank of divines of his age, had borne much; but these exhortations to concord he could not bear; and he taught his monitor, that he who undertakes to reconcile enemies must be prepared for the loss of friends. It was on every account a desperate endeavour. Baxter was opposed to every sect, and belonged to none. He can be properly described only as a Baxterian—at once the founder and the single disciple of an eclectic school, within the portals of which he invited all men, but persuaded none, to take refuge from their mutual animosities.

Had Baxter been content merely to establish truth, and to decline the refutation of error, many might have listened to a voice so earnest, and to counsels so profound. But, "while he spoke to them of peace, he made him ready for battle." Ten volumes, many of them full-grown quartos, vindicated his secession from the Church of England. Five other batteries, equally well served, were successively opened against the Antinomians, the Quakers, the Baptists, the Millenarians, and the Grotians. The last, of whom Dodwell was the leader, typified, in the reign of Charles, the divines who flourish at Oxford in the reign of Victoria. Long it were, and not very profitable, to record the events of these theological campaigns. They brought into the field Tillotson, Stillingfleet, and Dodwell. The men of learning were aided by the men of wit. Under the *nom de guerre* of "Tilenus Junior," Womack, the Bishop of St. David's, had incurred Baxter's censure for his

“abusive, virulent accusations of the Synod of Dort.” To this attack appeared an answer, entitled, “The Examination of Tilenus before the Triers, in order to his intended settlement in the office of a public preacher in the commonwealth of Utopia.” Among the jurors empannelled for the trial of Tilenus, are “Messrs. Absolute,” “Fatality,” “Preterition,” “Narrow Grace, *alias* Stint Grace,” “Take o’ Trust,” “Know Little,” and “Dubious,”—the last the established soubriquet for Richard Baxter. But neither smile nor sigh could be extorted from the veteran polemic; nor, in truth, had he much right to be angry. If not with equal pleasantry, he had with at least equal freedom, invented appellations for his opponents;—designating Dodwell, or his system, as “Leviathan, absolute, destructive Prelacy, the son of Abaddon, Apollyon, and not of Jesus Christ.” Statesmen joined in the affray. Morice, Charles’s first Secretary of State, contributed a treatise; and Lauderdale, who, with all his faults, was an accomplished scholar, and amidst all his inconsistencies, a stanch Presbyterian, accepted the dedication of one of Baxter’s controversial pieces, and presented him with twenty guineas. The unvarying kindness to the persecuted nonconformist of one who was himself a relentless persecutor, is less strange than the fact, that the future courtier of Charles read, during his imprisonment at Windsor, the whole of Baxter’s then published works, and, as their grateful author records, remembered them better than himself. While the pens of the wise, the witty, and the great, were thus employed against the universal antagonist, the Quakers assailed him with their tongues. Who could recognise, in the gentle and benevolent people who now bear that name, a trace of their ancestral character, of which Baxter has left the following singular record? “The Quakers in their shops, when I go along London Streets, say, alas! poor man, thou art yet in darkness. They have oft come to the congregation, when I had liberty to preach Christ’s gospel, and cried out against me as a deceiver of the people. They have followed me home, crying out in the streets, ‘the day of the Lord is coming, and thou shalt perish as a deceiver.’ They have stood in the market-place, and under my window, year after year, crying to the people, ‘take heed of your priests, they deceive your souls;’ and if any one wore a lace or neat clothing, they cried out to me, ‘these are the fruits of your ministry.’”

Against the divorce of divinity and politics, Baxter vehemently protested, as the putting asunder of things which a sacred ordinance had joined together. He therefore published a large volume, entitled "The Holy Commonwealth; a Plea for the cause of Monarchy, but as under God the Universal Monarch." Far better to have roused against himself all the quills which had ever bristled on all the "fretful porcupines" of theological strife. For, while vindicating the ancient government of England, he hazarded a distinct avowal of opinions, which, with their patrons, were to be proscribed with the return of the legitimate Sovereign. He taught that the laws of England are above the king; that Parliament was his highest court, where his personal will and word were not sufficient authority. He vindicated the war against Charles, and explained the apostolical principle of obedience to the higher powers as extending to the senate as well as to the emperor. The royal power had been given "for the common good, and no cause could warrant the king to make the commonwealth the party which he should exercise hostility against." All this was published at the moment of the fall of Richard Cromwell. Amidst the multitude of answers which it provoked may be especially noticed those of Harrington, the author of the "Oceana," and of Edward Pettit. "The former," says Baxter, "seemed in a Bethlehem rage, for, by way of scorn, he printed half a sheet of foolish jests, in such words as idiots or drunkards use, railing at ministers as a pack of fools and knaves, and, by his gibberish derision, persuading men that we deserve no other answer than such scorn and nonsense as beseemeth fools. With most insolent pride, he carried it as neither I nor any ministers understood at all what policy was; but prated against we knew not what, and had presumed to speak against other men's art, which he was master of, and his knowledge, to such idiots as we, incomprehensible." Pettit placed Baxter in hell, where Bradshawe acts as president, and Hobbes and Neville strive in vain for the crown which he awards to the nonconformist for pre-eminence of evil and mischief on earth. "Let him come in," exclaims the new Rhadamanthus, "and be crowned with wreaths of serpents, and chaplets of adders. Let his triumphant chariot be a pulpit drawn on the wheels of cannon by a brace of wolves in sheep's clothing. Let the ancient fathers of the Church,



whom out of ignorance he has vilified; the reverend and learned prelates, whom out of pride and malice he has belied, abused, and persecuted; the most righteous King, whose murder he has justified—let them all be bound in chains to attend his infernal triumph to his ‘Saint’s Everlasting Rest;’ then make room, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, atheists, and politicians, for the greatest rebel on earth, and next to him that fell from heaven.” Nor was this all. The “Holy Commonwealth” was amongst the books which the University of Oxford sentenced to the flames which had been less innocently kindled at the same place in a former generation, against the persons of men who had dared to proclaim unwelcome truths. Morley and many others branded it as treason; and the King was taught to regard the author as one of the most inveterate enemies of the royal authority. South joined in the universal clamour; and Baxter, in his autobiography, records, that when that great wit and author had been called to preach before the King, and a vast congregation drawn together by his high celebrity, he was compelled, after a quarter of an hour, to desist, and to retire from the pulpit exclaiming, “the Lord be merciful to our infirmities!” The sermon, which should have been recited, was afterwards published, and it appeared that the passage at which South’s presence of mind had failed him, was an invective against the “Holy Commonwealth.” After enduring for ten years the storm which his book had provoked, Baxter took the very singular course of publishing a revocation, desiring the world to consider it as *non scriptum*;—maintaining the while the general principles of his work, and “protesting against the judgment of posterity, and all others that were not of the same time and place, as to the mental censure either of the book or revocation, as being ignorant of the true reasons of them both.” We, therefore, who, for the present, constitute the posterity, against whose rash judgment this protest was entered, should be wary in censuring what, it must be confessed, is not very intelligible, except, indeed, as it is not difficult to perceive, motives enough for retreating from an unprofitable strife, even though the retreat could not be very skilfully accomplished.

Two volumes of Ecclesiastical History, the first a quarto of five hundred pages, the second a less voluminous vindi-



cation of its predecessor, attest the extent of Baxter's labours in this department of theological literature, and the stupendous compass of his reading. The authorities he enumerates, and from a diligent study of which his work is drawn, would form a considerable library.

Such labours as those we have mentioned, might seem to have left no vacant space in a life otherwise so actively employed. But these books, and the vast mass of unpublished manuscripts, are not the most extensive, as they are incomparably the least valuable, of the produce of his solitary hours.

With the exception of Grotius, Baxter is the first of that long series of writers who have undertaken to establish the truth of Christianity, by a systematic exhibition of the evidence and the arguments in favour of the divine origin of our faith. All homage to their cause, for we devoutly believe it to be the cause of truth! Be it acknowledged that their labours could not have been declined, without yielding a temporary and dangerous triumph to sophistry and presumptuous ignorance. Admit (as indeed it is scarcely possible to exaggerate) their boundless superiority to their antagonists in learning, in good faith, in sagacity, in range and depth of thought, and in whatever else was requisite in this momentous controversy;—concede, as for ourselves we delight to confess, that they have advanced their proofs to the utmost heights of probability which by such reasonings it is possible to scale;—with these concessions may not inconsistently be combined some distaste for these inquiries, and some doubt of their real value.

The sacred writers have none of the timidity of their modern apologists. They never sue for an assent to their doctrines, but authoritatively command the acceptance of them. They denounce unbelief as guilt, and insist on faith as a virtue of the highest order. In their Catholic invitations, the intellectual not less than the social distinctions of mankind are unheeded. Every student of their writings is aware of these facts; but the solution of them is less commonly observed. It is, we apprehend, that the Apostolic authors assume the existence in all men of a spiritual discernment, enabling the mind, when unclouded by appetite or passion, to recognise and distinguish the Divine voice, whether uttered from within by the intimations of conscience, or speaking from without in the language of in-

spired oracles. They presuppose that vigour of understanding may consist with feebleness of reason; and that the power of discriminating between religious truths and error does not chiefly depend on the culture, or on the exercise of the mere argumentative faculty. The especial patrimony of the poor and the illiterate—the Gospel—has been the stay of countless millions who never framed a syllogism. Of the great multitudes whom no man can number, who before and since the birth of Grotius have lived in the peace, and died in the consolations of our faith, how incomparably few are they whose convictions have been derived from the study of works like his! Of the numbers who have addicted themselves to such studies, how small is the proportion of those who have brought to the task either learning, or leisure, or industry sufficient to enable them to form an independent judgment on the questions in debate! Called to the exercise of a judicial function for which he is but ill prepared—addressed by pleadings on an issue where his prepossessions are all but unalterable, bidden to examine evidences which he has most rarely the skill, the learning, or the leisure to verify, and pressed by arguments, sometimes overstrained, and sometimes fallacious—he who lays the foundations of his faith in such “evidences,” will but too commonly end either in yielding a credulous, and therefore an infirm assent, or by reposing in a self-sufficient and far more hazardous incredulity.

For these reasons, we attach less value to the long series of Baxter's works in support of the foundations of the Christian faith than to the rest of his books which have floated in safety down the tide of time to the present day. Yet it would be difficult to select, from the same class of writings, any more eminently distinguished by the earnest love and the fearless pursuit of truth; or to name an inquirer into these subjects who possessed and exercised to a greater extent the power of suspending his long-cherished opinions, and of closely interrogating every doubt by which they were obstructed.

In his solicitude to sustain the conclusions he had so laboriously formed, Baxter unhappily invoked the aid of arguments, which, however impressive in his own days, are answered in ours by a smile, if not by a sneer. The

sneer, however, would be at once unmerited and unwise. When Hale was adjudging witches to death, and More preaching against their guilt, and Boyle investigating the sources of their power, it is not surprising that Baxter availed himself of the evidence afforded by witchcraft and apparitions in proof of the existence of a world of spirits; and therefore in support of one of the fundamental tenets of revealed religion. Marvellous, however, it is, in running over his historical discourse on that subject, to find him giving so unhesitating an assent to the long list of extravagances and nursery tales which he has there brought together; unsupported as they almost all are by any proof that such facts occurred at all, or by any decorous pretext for referring them to preternatural agency. Simon Jones, a stout-hearted and able-bodied soldier, standing sentinel at Worcester, was driven away from his post by the appearance of something like a headless bear. A drunkard was warned against intemperance by the lifting up of his shoes by an invisible hand. One of the witches condemned by Hale threw a girl into fits. Mr. Emlin, a bystander, "suddenly felt a force pull one of the hooks from his breeches, and, while he looked with wonder what had become of it, the tormented girl vomited it up out of her mouth." At the house of Mr. Beecham, there was a tobacco pipe which had the habit of "moving itself from a shelf at the one end of the room to a shelf at the other end of the room." When Mr. Munn, the minister, went to witness the prodigy, the tobacco pipe remained stationary; but a great Bible made a spontaneous leap into his lap, and opened itself at a passage, on the hearing of which the evil spirit who had possessed the pipe was exorcised. "This Mr. Munn himself told me, when in the sickness year, 1665, I lived in Stockerson Hall. I have no reason to suspect the veracity of a sober man, a constant preacher, and a good scholar." Baxter was credulous and incredulous for precisely the same reason. Possessing by long habit a mastery over his thoughts, such as few other men ever acquired, a single effort of the will was sufficient to exclude from his view whatever recollections he judged hostile to his immediate purpose. Every prejudice was at once banished when any debateable point was to be scrutinized; and, with equal facility, every reasonable doubt was exiled when his only object was to enforce or illustrate a doctrine of the truth of which he was

assured. The perfect submission of the will to the reason may belong to some higher state of being than ours. On mortal man that gift is not bestowed. In the best and the wisest, inclination will often grasp the reins by which she ought to be guided, and misdirect the judgment which she should obey. Happy they, who, like Baxter, have so disciplined the affections, as to disarm their temporary usurpation of all its more dangerous tendencies!

Controversies are ephemeral. Ethics, metaphysics, and political philosophy are doomed to an early death, unless when born of genius and nurtured by intense and self-denying industry. Even the theologians of one age must, alas! too often disappear to make way for those of later times. But if there is an exception to the general decree which consigns man and his intellectual offspring to the same dull forgetfulness, it is in favour of such writings as those which fill the four folio volumes bearing the title of "Baxter's Practical Works." Their appearance in twenty-three smart octavos is nothing short of a profanation. Hew down the Pyramids into a range of streets, divide Niagara into a succession of water privileges, but let not the spirits of the mighty dead be thus evoked from their majestic shrines to animate the dwarfish structures of our bookselling generation. Deposit one of those gray folios on a resting-place equal to that venerable burden, then call up the patient and serious thoughts which its very aspect should inspire, and confess that, among the writings of uninspired men, there are none better fitted to awaken, to invigorate, to enlarge, or to console the mind, which can raise itself to such celestial colloquy. True, they abound in undistinguishable distinctions; the current of emotion, when flowing most freely, is but too often obstructed by metaphysical rocks and shallows, or diverted from its course into some dialectic winding; one while the argument is obscured by servent expostulation; at another the passion is dried up by the analysis of the ten thousand springs of which it is compounded; here is a maze of subtleties to be unravelled, and there a crowd of the obscurely learned to be refuted; the unbroken solemnity may shed some gloom on the traveller's path, and the length of the way may now and then entice him to slumber. But where else can be found an exhibition, at once so vivid and so chaste, of the diseases of the human heart—a detection so fearfully exact, of the



sophistries of which we are first the voluntary and then the unconscious victims—a light thrown with such intensity on the madness and the wo of every departure from the rules of virtue—a development of those rules so comprehensive and so elevated—counsels more shrewd or more persuasive—or a proclamation more consolatory of the resources provided by Christianity for escaping the dangers by which we are surrounded—of the eternal rewards she promises—or of the temporal blessings she imparts, as an earnest and a foretaste of them? “*Largior hic campis æther.*” Charles, and Laud, and Cromwell, are forgotten. We have no more to do with anti-pædobaptism or prelacy. L’Estrange and Morley disturb not this higher region; but man and his noblest pursuits—Deity, in the highest conceptions of his attributes which can be extracted from the poor materials of human thought—the world we inhabit divested of the illusions which insnare us—the world to which we look forward bright with the choicest colours of hope—the glorious witnesses, and the Divine Guide and Supporter of our conflict—throng, animate, and inform every crowded page. In this boundless repository, the intimations of inspired wisdom are pursued into all their bearings on the various conditions and exigencies of life, with a fertility which would inundate and overpower the most retentive mind, had it not been balanced by a method and a discrimination even painfully elaborate. Through the vast accumulation of topics, admonitions, and inquiries, the love of truth is universally conspicuous. To every precept is appended the limitations it seems to demand. No difficulty is evaded. Dogmatism is never permitted to usurp the province of argument. Each equivocal term is curiously defined, and each plausible doubt narrowly examined. Not content to explain the results he has reached, he exhibits the process by which they were excogitated, and lays open all the secrets of his mental laboratory. And a wondrous spectacle it is. Calling to his aid an extent of theological and scholastic lore sufficient to equip a whole college of divines, and moving beneath the load with unencumbered freedom, he expatiates and rejoices in all the intricacies of his way—now plunging into the deepest thickets of casuistic and psychological speculation—and then emerging from them to resume his chosen task of probing the conscience, by remonstrances from which there is no escape



—or of quickening the sluggish feelings by strains of exalted devotion.

That expostulations and arguments of which almost all admit the justice, and the truth of which none can disprove, should fall so ineffectually on the ear, and so seldom reach the heart, is a phenomenon worthy of more than a passing notice, and meriting an inquiry of greater exactness than it usually receives, even from those who profess the art of healing our spiritual maladies. To resolve it “into the corruption of human nature,” is but to change the formula in which the difficulty is proposed. To affirm that a corrupt nature always gives an undue preponderance to the present above the future, is untrue in fact; for some of our worst passions—avarice, for example, revenge, ambition, and the like—chiefly manifest their power in the utter disregard of immediate privations and sufferings, with a view to a supposed remote advantage. To represent the world as generally incredulous as to the reality of a retributive state, is to contradict universal experience, which shows how firmly that persuasion is incorporated with the language, habits, and thoughts of mankind;—manifesting itself most distinctly in those great exigencies of life, when disguise is the least practicable. To refer to an external spiritual agency, determining the will to a wise or a foolish choice, is only to reproduce the original question in another form—what is that structure or mechanism of the human mind by means of which such influences operate to control or guide our volitions? The best we can throw out as an answer to the problem is, that the constitution of our frames, partly sensitive and partly rational, and corresponding with this the condition of our sublunary existence, pressed by animal as well as by spiritual wants, condemns us to a constant oscillation between the sensual and the divine, between the propensities which we share with the brute creation, and the aspirations which connect us with the author of our being. The rational soul contemplates means only in reference to their ends; whilst the sensuous nature reposes in means alone, and looks no farther. Imagination, alternately the ally of each, most readily lends her powerful aid to the ignobler party. Her golden hues are more easily employed to exalt and refine the grossness of appetite, than to impart brilliancy and allurements to objects brought within the sphere of human vision by the

exercise of faith and hope. Her draperies are adjusted with greater facility, to clothe the nakedness and to conceal the shame of those things with which she is most conversant; than to embellish the forms, and add grace to the proportions of things obscurely disclosed at few and transient intervals. It is with this formidable alliance of sense and imagination that religion has to contend. Her aim is to win over to her side that all-powerful mental faculty which usually takes part with her antagonist, and thus to shed over every step in life the colours borrowed from its ultimate as contrasted with its immediate tendency;—to teach us to regard the pleasures and the pains of our mortal state in the light in which we shall view them in our immortal existence; to make things hateful or lovely now, according as they impede or promote our welfare hereafter. He is a religious, or in the appropriate language of theology, a “regenerate” man, who, trained to this discipline, habitually transfers to the means he employs, the aversion or the dislike due to the end he contemplates; who discerns and loathes the poison in the otherwise tempting cup of unhallowed indulgence, and perceives and loves the medicinal balm in the otherwise bitter draught of hardy self-denial. Good Richard Baxter erected his four folio volumes as a dam with which to stay this confluent flood of sense and imagination, and to turn aside the waters into a more peaceful and salutary channel. When their force is correctly estimated, it is more reasonable to wonder that he and his fellow-labourers have succeeded so well, than that their success has been no greater.

On his style as an author, Baxter himself is the best critic. “The commonness and the greatness of men’s necessity,” he says, “commanded me to do any thing that I could for their relief, and to bring forth some water to cast upon this fire, though I had not at hand a silver vessel to carry it in, nor thought it the most fit. The plainest words are the most profitable oratory in the weightiest matters. Fineness for ornament, and delicacy for delight; but they answer not necessity, though sometimes they may modestly attend that which answers it.” He wrote to give utterance to a full mind and a teeming spirit. Probably he never consumed forty minutes in as many years, in the mere selection and adjustment of words. So to have employed his time, would in his judgment have been

a sinful waste of that precious gift. "I thought to have acquainted the world with nothing but what was the work of time and diligence, but my conscience soon told me that there was too much of pride and selfishness in this, and that humility and self-denial required me to lay by the affectation of that style, and spare that industry which tended but to advance my name with men, when it hindered the main work and crossed my end." Such is his own account; and, had he consulted Quintilian, he could have found no better precept for writing well than that which his conscience gave him for writing usefully. First of all the requisites for excelling in the art of composition, as one of the greatest masters of that art in modern times, Sir Walter Scott, informs us, is "to have something to say." When there are thoughts that burn, there never will be wanting words that breathe. Baxter's language is plain and perspicuous when his object is merely to inform; copious and flowing when he exhorts; and when he yields to the current of his feelings, it becomes redundant and impassioned, and occasionally picturesque and graphic. There are innumerable passages of the most touching pathos and unconscious eloquence, but not a single sentence written for effect. His chief merit as an artist is, that he is perfectly artless; and that he employs a style of great compass and flexibility, in such a manner as to demonstrate that he never thought about it, and as to prevent the reader, so long at least as he is reading, from thinking about it either.

The canons of criticism, which the great Nonconformist drew from his conscience, are, however, sadly inapplicable to verse. Mr. James Montgomery has given his high suffrage in favour of Baxter's poetical powers, and justifies his praise by a few passages selected from the rest with equal tenderness and discretion. It is impossible to subscribe to this heresy even in deference to such an authority; or to resist the suspicion that the piety of the critic has played false with his judgment. Nothing short of an actual and plenary inspiration will enable any man who composes as rapidly as he writes, to give meet utterance to those ultimate secretions of the deepest thoughts and the purest feelings in which the essence of poetry consists. Baxter's verses, which however are not very numerous, would be decidedly improved by being shorn of their

rhyme and rhythm, in which state they would look like very devout and judicious prose, as they really are.

Every man must and will have some relief from his more severe pursuits. His faithful pen attended Baxter in his pastime as in his studies; and produced an autobiography, which appeared after his death in a large folio volume. Calamy desired to throw these posthumous sheets into the editorial crucible, and to reproduce them in the form of a corrected and well-arranged abridgment. Mr. Orme laments the obstinacy of the author's literary executor, which forbade the execution of this design. Few who know the book will agree with him. A strange chaos indeed it is. But Grainger has well said of the writer, that "men of his size are not to be drawn in miniature." Large as life, and finished to the most minute detail, his own portrait, from his own hand, exhibits to the curious in such things a delineation, of which they would not willingly spare a single stroke, and which would have lost all its force and freedom if reduced and varnished by any other limner, however practised, or however felicitous. There he stands, an intellectual giant as he was, playing with his quill as Hercules with the distaff, his very sport a labour, under which any one but himself would have staggered. Towards the close of the first book occurs a passage, which, though often republished, and familiar to most students of English literature, must yet be noticed as the most impressive record in our own language, if not in any tongue, of the gradual ripening of a powerful mind, under the culture of incessant study, wide experience, and anxious self-observation. Mental anatomy, conducted by a hand at once so delicate and so firm, and comparisons so exquisitely just, between the impressions and impulses of youth, and the tranquil conclusions of old age, bring his career of strife and trouble to a close of unexpected and welcome serenity. In the full maturity of such knowledge as is to be acquired on earth, of the mysteries of our mortal and of our immortal existence, the old man returns at last for repose to the elementary truths, the simple lessons, and the confiding affections of his childhood; and writes an unintended commentary, of unrivalled force and beauty, on the inspired declaration, that to become as little children is the indispensable, though arduous condition of attaining to true heavenly wisdom.



To substitute for this self-portraiture, any other analysis of Baxter's intellectual and moral character, would indeed be a vain attempt. If there be any defect or error of which he was unconscious, and which he therefore has not avowed, it was the combination of an undue reliance on his own powers of investigating truth, with an undue distrust in the result of his inquiries. He proposed to himself, and executed, the task of exploring the whole circle of the moral sciences, logic, ethics, divinity, politics, and metaphysics, and this toil he accomplished amidst public employments of ceaseless importunity, and bodily pains almost unintermitted. Intemperance never assumed a more venial form; but that this insatiate thirst for knowledge was indulged to a faulty excess, no reader of his life, or of his works, can doubt. In one of his most remarkable treatises "On Falsely Pretended Knowledge," the dangerous result of indulging this omnivorous appetite is peculiarly remarkable. Probabilities, the only objects of such studies, will at length become evanescent, or scarcely perceptible, when he who holds the scales refuses to adjust the balance, until satisfied that he has laden each with every suggestion and every argument which can be derived from every author who has preceded him in the same inquiries. Yet more hopeless is the search for truth, when this adjustment, once made, is again to be verified as often as any new speculations are discovered; and when the very faculty of human understanding, and the laws of reasoning, are themselves to be questioned and examined anew as frequently as doubts can be raised of their adaptation to their appointed ends. Busied with this immense apparatus, and applying it to this boundless field of inquiry, Baxter would have been bewildered by his own efforts, and lost in the mazes of a universal skepticism, but for the ardent piety which possessed his soul, and the ever recurring expectation of approaching death, which dissipated his ontological dreams, and roused him to the active duties, and the instant realities of life. Even as it is, he has left behind him much, which, in direct opposition to his own purposes, might cherish the belief that human existence was some strange chimera, and human knowledge an illusion, did it not fortunately happen that he is tedious in proportion as he is mystical. Had he possessed and employed the wit and gaiety of Boyle, there are some of



his writings to which a place must have been assigned in the *Index Expurgatorius* of Protestantism.

Amongst his contemporaries, Baxter appears to have been the object of general reverence, and of as general unpopularity. His temper was austere and irritable, his address ungracious and uncouth. While cordially admitting the merits of each rival sect, he concurred with none, but was the common censor and opponent of all. His own opinions on church government coincided with the later judgment, or, as it should rather be said, with the concessions of Archbishop Usher. They adjusted the whole of that interminable dispute to their mutual satisfaction at a conference which did not last above half an hour; for each of them was too devoutly intent on the great objects of Christianity to differ with each other very widely as to mere ritual observances. The contentions by which our forefathers were agitated on these subjects, have now happily subsided into a speculative and comparatively uninteresting debate. They produced their best, and perhaps their only desirable result, in diffusing through the Church, and amongst the people of England, an indestructible conviction of the folly of attempting to coerce the human mind into a servitude to any system or profession of belief; or of endeavouring to produce amongst men any real uniformity of opinion on subjects beyond the cognizance of the bodily senses, and of daily observation. They have taught us all to acknowledge in practice, though some may yet deny in theory, that as long as men are permitted to avow the truth, the inherent diversities of their understandings, and of their circumstances, must impel them to the acknowledgment of corresponding variations of judgment, on all questions which touch the mysteries of the present or of the future life. If no man laboured more, or with less success, to induce mankind to think alike on these topics, no one ever exerted himself more zealously, or more effectually, than did Richard Baxter, both by his life and his writings, to divert the world from those petty disputes which falsely assume the garb of religious zeal, to those eternal and momentous truths, in the knowledge, the love, and the practice of which, the essence of religion consists.

One word respecting the edition of his works, to which we referred in the outset. For the reason already men-

tioned, we have stuck to our long-revered folios, without reading so much as a page of their diminutive representatives, and can therefore report nothing about them. But after diligently and repeatedly reading the two introductory volumes by Mr. Orme, we rejoice in the opportunity of bearing testimony to the merits of a learned, modest, and laborious writer, who is now, however, beyond the reach of human praise or censure. He has done every thing for Baxter's memory which could be accomplished by a skilful abridgment of his autobiography, and a careful analysis of the theological library of which he was the author; aided by an acquaintance with the theological literature of the seventeenth century, such as no man but himself has exhibited, and which it may safely be conjectured no other man possesses. Had Mr. Orme been a member of the Established Church, and had he chosen a topic more in harmony with the studies of that learned body, his literary abilities would have been far more correctly estimated, and more widely celebrated. We fear that they who dissent from her communion, and who are therefore excluded from her universities and her literary circles, are not to expect for their writings the same toleration which is so firmly secured for their persons and their ministry. Let them not, however, be dejected. Let them take for examples those whom they have selected as teachers; and learning from Richard Baxter to live and to write, they will either achieve his celebrity, or will be content, as he was, to labour without any other recompense than the tranquillity of his own conscience, the love of the people among whom he dwelt, and the approbation of the Master to whom every hour of his life, and every page of his books, were alike devoted.

## PHYSICAL THEORY OF ANOTHER LIFE.\*

(*Edinburgh Review*, 1840.)

IN a series of volumes of later birth than that from which the author of the "Natural History of Enthusiasm" takes the title of his literary peerage, he has bent his strength to the task of revealing to itself the generation to which he belongs. A thankless office that of the censorship! A formidable enterprise this, to rebuke the errors of a contentious age, while repelling the support of each of the contending parties! To appease the outraged self-complacency of mankind, such a monitor will be cited before a tribunal far more relentless than his own. Heedless both of contumely and of neglect, he must pursue his labours in reliance on himself and on his cause; or, if fame be the reward to which he aspires, he must content himself with the anticipation of posthumous renown. It is not, however, easy for the aspirant himself to find the necessary aliment for such hopes. The writer of these works will therefore indulge us in a theory invented for the aid of his and our own imagination. Let it be supposed, that, instead of yet living to instruct the world, he was now engaged in bringing to the test of experiment his own speculations as to the condition of mankind in the future state. He re-appears amongst sublunary men under the auspices of some not unfriendly editor; who, however, being without any other sources of intelligence respecting his course of life and studies, has diligently searched his books for such intimations as may furnish the materials for a short "Introductory Notice" of him and of them. The compiler is one of those who prefer the positive to the conjectural style of recounting matters of fact; and has assumed the freedom of throwing into the form of unqualified

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assertion the inferences he had gleaned from detached passages of the volumes he is about to republish. With the help of this slight and not very improbable hypothesis, the author of these works, while still remaining amongst us, may suppose himself to be reading, in some such lines as the following, the sentence which the critic of a future day will pass on his literary character.

One of those seemingly motionless rivers which wind their way through the undulating surface of England, creeps round the outskirts of a long succession of buildings, half town, half village, where the monotony of the wattled cottages is relieved by the usual neighbourhood of structures of greater dignity;—the moated grange—the mansion-house, pierced by lines of high narrow windows—the square tower of the church, struggling through a copse of lime trees—the gray parsonage, where the conservative rector meditates his daily newspaper and his weekly discourse—the barn-fashioned meeting-house, coeval with the accession of the House of Hanover—and near it the decent residence, in which, since that auspicious era, have dwelt the successive pastors of that wandering flock—fanning a generous spirit of resistance to tyrants, now happily to be encountered only in imagination, or in the records of times long since passed away.

Towards the close of the last century, a mild and venerable man ruled his household in that modest but not unornamented abode; for there might be seen the solemn portraits of the original confessors of Nonconformity, with many a relic commemorative of their sufferings and their worth. Contrasted with these were the lighter and varied embellishments which bespeak the presence of refined habits, female taste, and domestic concord. There also were drawn up, in deep files, the works and the biographies of the Puritan divines, from Thomas Cartwright, the great antagonist of Whitgift, to Matthew Pool, who, in his *Synopsis Criticorum*, vindicated the claims of the rejected ministers to profound Biblical learning. This veteran battalion was flanked by a company of recruits drafted from the polite literature of a more frivolous age. Rich in these treasures, and in the happy family with whom he shared them, the good man would chide or smile away such clouds as checkered his habitual serenity, when those little nameless courtesies, so pleasantly interchanged between equals,

were declined by the orthodox incumbent, or accepted with elaborate condescension by the wealthy squire. The democratic sway of the ruling elders, supreme over the finances and the doctrines of the chapel, failed to draw an audible sigh from his resolute spirit, even when his more delicate sense was writhing under wounds imperceptible to their coarser vision. He had deliberately made his choice, and was content to pay the accustomed penalties. A sectarian in name, he was at heart a catholic, generous enough to feel that the insolence of some of his neighbours, and the vulgarity of others, were rather the accidents of their position than the vices of their character. Vexations such as these were beneath the regard of him who maintained in the village the sacred cause for which martyrs had sacrificed life with all its enjoyments; and who aspired to train up his son to the same honourable service, ill requited as it was by the glory or the riches of this transitory world.

That hope, however, was not to be fulfilled. The youth had inherited his father's magnanimity, his profound devotion, his freedom of thought, and his thirst for knowledge. But he disclaimed the patrimony of his father's ecclesiastical opinions. His was not one of those minds which adjust themselves to whatever mould early habits may have prepared for them. It was compounded of elements, between which there are no apparent affinities, but the reverse; and which, for that reason, produce in their occasional and infrequent combination, a character substantive, individual, and strongly discriminated from that of other men. Shrinking from the coarse familiarities of the world, he thirsted for the world's applause—at once a very libertine in the unfettered exercise of his own judgment, and a very worshipper of all legitimate authority—alternately bracing his nerves for theological strife, and dissolving them in romantic dreams—now buried in the depths of retirement, that he might plunge deeper still into the solitudes of his own nature; and then revealing his discoveries in a style copied from the fashionable models of philosophical oratory;—the young man of whom we tell might be described as a sensitive plant grafted on a Norwegian pine, as a Spartan soldier enamoured of the Idylls of Theocritus, or as an anchorite studious of the precepts of the cosmetic Earl of Chesterfield. Nature and accident combined to produce this contrast; integrity and truth gradually blended



it into one harmonious, though singular whole. The robust structure of his understanding might have rendered him a rude dogmatist, if the delicate texture of his sensitive or spiritual frame had not forbidden every approach of arrogance. Exploring with intrepid diligence the great questions debated amongst men regarding their eternal interests, he recoiled with disgust from the unmannerly habits, the sordid passions, and the petty jealousies which proclaim, but too loudly, that while we dispute about the path to heaven, we are still treading the miry ways of this uncelestial world. Angelic abodes, and holy abstractions, and universal love, were the alluring themes ; but, handled as they were by polemics in the language of Dennis, and in the spirit of the Dunciad, our theological student was sometimes tempted to wish that the day on which he was initiated into the mysteries of the Hornbook might be blotted from the calendar. Thrown into early association with the depressed and less prosperous party in the ecclesiastical quarrels of his native land, the asperities of the contest presented themselves to his inquisitive and too susceptible eye, unmitigated by the graceful and well-woven veil, beneath which sophistry and rancour can find a specious disguise when allied to rank and fortune and other social distinctions. Episcopal charges and congregational pamphlets might vie with each other in bitterness and wrong ; but there rested with the mitred disputant an unquestionable advantage in the grace and dignity and seeming composure with which he inflicted pain and quickened the appetite for revenge. By the unsullied moral sense of the young divine, either form of malevolence might be equally condemned ; but to his fastidious taste the ruder aspect which it bore amongst the advocates of dissent was by far the more offensive.

Feelings painfully alive to the ungraceful and the homely in human character, invariably indicate an absence of the higher powers of imagination. To a great painter the countenance of no man is entirely devoid of beauty. To one worthy of the much prostituted name of poet, no forms of society are without their interest and their charm. But he whom the gods have not made poetical may be kind-hearted and wise, and even possessed by many a brilliant fancy, and by many a noble aspiration ; and so it fared with this scion of a Nonconformist race. From the coarseness

of a spiritual democracy, from the parsimonious simplicity of their sacred edifices, from the obtrusive prominence of the leaders of their worship, and from their seeming isolation in the midst of the great Christian commonwealth, his thoughts turned to those more august communions, where the splendours of earth symbolize the hierarchies of heaven—where the successors in an unbroken lineage of apostles and martyrs are yet ministering at the altar—where that consecrated shrine echoes to the creeds and the supplications of the first converts to the faith—and where alone can flourish those arduous but unobtrusive virtues, of which an exact subordination of ranks forms the indispensable basis. Already half-diverted by such yearnings as these from his hereditary standard, his return to the embrace of the Episcopal Church was further aided by a morbid dislike, unworthy of his powerful intellect, of falling into commonplace trains of thought or language. Educated in a body through which religious opinions and pious phrases but too lightly circulate, his instinctive dread of vulgarity led him into speculations where such associates would be shaken off, and to the use of a style such as was never employed by the dwellers in tabernacles. Of a nature the most unaffected, and irreproachably upright in the search of truth, he conducted his inquiries with such elaborate fineness of speech, and with such a fear of acquiescing in the bare creed of the school in which he had been bred, that his fellow-scholars must have formed an unjust estimate of their companion, had he not been withdrawn in early life to other associations, and to far different studies from those which they had pursued in common. From his parental village, the future author was transferred to the remote and busy world in which our English youth are instructed in the unjoyous science of special pleading, and trained for the dignities of the Coif.

By the unlearned in such matters, more distinct evidence of this passage in his life may perhaps be demanded than the indications which his writings afford of a technical acquaintance with the law. But every "free and accepted brother" of the craft will recognise, in his frequent and curiously exact use of forensic language, a confidence and a skill which belong only to the acolyte in those studies. That the *Térm Reports* would be searched in vain for specimens of his dialectic powers may, however, be readily

believed. Thurlow had as little to fear from the rivalry of the author of the "Task," as Lord Cottènam from that of the author of the "Natural History of Enthusiasm." Westminster Hall is no theatre to be trodden by men of pensive spirits, delicate nerves, and high-wrought sensibilities. It is to England what the plain of Elis was to Greece; and when a Pindar shall arise to celebrate the triumphs achieved there, he must sing of heroes who have rejoiced in the dust and sweat and turmoil of the strife, of men of thick skins and robust consciences, buoyant and fearless, prompt in resources, and unscrupulous in the use of them. Far otherwise the original of the portrait, so vividly yet so unconsciously self-drawn in these volumes. Every lineament tells of one incapable of lending himself to any wilful sophistry—of a man rich both in knowledge and in power, though destitute of that quiet energy which in judicial tribunals, finds appropriate utterance in the simplest combinations of the plainest words—of a mind banqueting on contemplations most abhorrent from those of the peremptory paper. Not, however, "the worst of all his ills, the noisy bar." Political strife shed a repulsive gloom over the other halls of the ancient Palace of Westminster. The whole tribe of party writers, diurnal and hebdomadal, overshadowed his path, like a flight of obscene birds, polluting by their touch and distracting by their dissonance those researches into the interests of the commonwealth and the duties of her chiefs, to which he desired to address a serene and unbiassed judgment. His heart assured, and his observation convinced him, that not merely the leaders, but even the subalterns of contending factions, were far wiser and better men than they appeared in those clever, reckless, and malignant sketches thrown off from day to day by writers condemned to lives of ceaseless excitement, and excluded from the blessings of leisure and of self-communion.

It is an old tale. Our author bade the town farewell, yet in a spirit far different from that of the injured Thales. He had no wrongs, real or imaginary, to resent, nor one sarcasm for the great city in which he had faintly wooed the smiles of fortune. With a mind as tranquil as the rural scenes to which he retired, he sought there leisure for many an unworldly and for some whimsical specula-

tions, with a resting-place for the household and the library which divided his heart between them.

A topographical catalogue of the books which a man has collected and arranged for his own delight, will lay open some of the recesses of his bosom as clearly as ever the character of courtier or cavalier was sketched by the pen of Clarendon.

In the chamber where our recluse held his reign, the monarch of many a well peopled province, giving audience in turn to each of his many-tongued subjects, and exacting from them all tribute at his pleasure, might be seen, supreme in place and favour, a venerable copy of the Jewish and Christian scriptures. A troop of tall, sad-coloured folios, the depositaries of the devout studies and anxious self-searchings of the puritan divines, was drawn up on shelves within reach of his outstretched arm. With but little additional effort it encountered a tribe of more lofty discourse, bred in the sacred solitudes of Port-Royal, yet redolent of the passion of their native land for an imposing and graceful demeanour. Honest George Latimer, with a long line of Episcopal and Episcopalian successors, held a position a little ostentatiously prominent, accorded to them not merely from their own unrivalled worth and beauty, but also perhaps from the wish of the autocrat to avow their influence over him. But the main power of his state consisted in a race of ancient lineage and obsolete tongues, beginning with Clement, Justin, and Irenæus, and so onward through the long series of Greek and Latin Fathers, ecclesiastical historians, acts of councils and of saints, decretals, missals, and liturgies, all in turn casting their transient lights and their deep shadows over the checkered fortunes of the Christian Church. Brought within the precincts of this wide dominion, Homer, Æschylus, Dante, Shakspeare, and the humbler partakers of their inspiration, awaited at some distance the occasional summons of this mighty potentate. But in their reverend aspect might be perceived something, which confessed that they were not amongst his chosen and habitual companions. Court favour here, as elsewhere, seemed to be capricious in proportion as it was diffusive; and writers on physiology, astronomy, plants, insects, birds, and fishes, shared with metaphysicians, moralists, and the writers of civil history, the hours occasionally withdrawn by their master from more serious intercourse with his apos-



tolic, patristic, papal, and reformed counsellors. In short, it was one of those rooms which he who can securely possess, quietly enjoy, and wisely use, may, in sober truth, pity the owners of Versailles and the Escorial.

Wise men read books that they may learn to read themselves, and for this purpose quit their libraries for the open air. The heath, the forest or the river-side, is the true academy. There the student, with no kind neighbour to dissipate his thoughts, and with no importunate author to chain them down, casts them into such forms of soliloquy or dialogue, of verse or prose, as best suits the humour or the duties of the passing day. This peripatetic discipline is best observed under cover of an angling rod, a bill hook, or a gun; for then may not the vicar or the major, without an evident breach of privilege, detain you on the county-rate question, nor may the gentler voice of wife or daughter upbraid you with the sad list of your unrequited visits. Besides, your country philosopher flatters himself that in hooking a trout, or flushing a pheasant, his eye is as true and his hand as steady as those of the squire; and from this amiable weakness the historian of enthusiasm would seem not to have been quite exempt. Emerging from his library as one resolved to bring home some score head of game, his stout purposes would gradually die away as he reached the brook, whose windings were oddly associated in his mind with various theories by which the world was one day to be enlightened, and with many half-conceived chapters of essays yet to be written. To meditate on the advantages of meditation, was on these occasions one of his chosen exercises; and, in the ornate style to which he was wedded, he would muse on those in whom "the intellectual life is quick in all its parts." "It is," he would say, "as when the waters of a lake are left to deposite their feculence and to become pure as the ether itself, so that they not only reflect from their surface the splendours of heaven, but allow the curious eye to gaze delighted upon the decorated grottoes and sparkling caverns of the depth beneath. Or might we say, that the ground of the human heart is thickly fraught with seeds which never germinate under either a wintry or a too fervent sky; but let the dew come gently on the ground, and let mild suns warm it, and let it be guarded against external rudeness, and we shall see spring up the gaiety and fragrance of a garden. The Eden of



human nature has indeed long been trampled down and desolated and storms waste it continually; nevertheless the soil is still rich with the germs of its pristine beauty, the colours of paradise are sleeping in the clods, and a little favour, a little protection, a little culture, shall show what once was there. Or, if we look at the human spirit in its relation to futurity, it must be acknowledged that as an immortality of joy is its proper destiny, so it is moved by instincts which are the true prognostics of eternal life. Earthly passions quench these fore-scents of happiness, but meditation fosters them; and the life of the religious recluse is a delicious anticipation of pleasures that shall have no end."

Strange that one who justly claimed a high station among the bold and original thinkers of his times, should have woven this tissue of brave words, and should have decked his most elaborate inquiries with countless posies as garish as these! But the key to the riddle has already been given. Could notes have been struck less in unison with the Cantilena of the meeting-house? Could any have been touched better fitted to charm those dear but dangerous judges, who in winter evenings listen to a revered and familiar voice reciting passages, which still glow in their and in his own too partial eyes with all the freshness of creation? Has not the immutable decree gone forth, that though he whose home is secure from the invasions of the world may write excellently upon home education, he must watch jealously against home criticism? And yet an English gentleman of our railway age, who had devoted himself to an anchorite life, might with some reason insist that the fruits he had gathered for the use of other secluded households could be brought to no better test than the good or ill-liking of the companions of his own retreat. To betake himself, as our author was wont to do, "to some valley of silence," and there, as he expressed it, to "accumulate a rich treasure of undefined sentiments and indistinct conceptions," was to indulge in a diet at once intoxicating and unnutritious. The juices of his mental frame would have been altogether attenuated by thus feeding on bright unutterable day-dreams about the microcosm within him; or the unembodied spirits who surrounded him; or the physical structure of the paradise he hoped to regain; or any thing else, so long as it was but foreign to the pursuits, the cares, and the interests

of the world in which he lived. But then would succeed the cheerful fire-side talk, which compelled him to become intelligible to others and to himself. What Plato meant in many of his discourses, no one, with reverence be it spoken, has ever very clearly discovered; but who would have found courage to make the attempt, but for those bright fictions which bring the reader into a colloquial party, where much of the gaseous matter which must otherwise have exhaled into an impalpable mist, is fixed and brought within the range of human perception by the necessities of the dialogue. Even so, our modern speculator, after soaring "into that wide and uncircumscribed sphere wherein spirits excursive and philosophically modest take their range," and gathering there, "if not certain and irrefragable conclusions, at least scattered particles of wisdom, which he more highly esteemed than all the stamped coinage whereof dogmatism makes its boast," would make his way home again, and explain himself to an audience which Socrates might have envied. There, condescending to enter "within that bounded circle of things which may be measured on all sides and categorically spoken of," he would exhibit the inbred vigour of his understanding, quickened and guided by the native kindness of his heart. Had he not been a husband and a father, he would have been a mystic. His interior life would have degenerated into one protracted and unsubstantial vision, if his house had not echoed to a concert of young voices executing all manner of sprightly variations on the key-notes sounded by his own. His "free converse with truth and reason in the sanctuary of his own bosom," would have been held in that incommunicable language which reason was never yet able to understand, if his free converse with his boys and girls had not habitually admonished him that the sublime in words may be easily combined with the beautiful in sentences, without the slightest advantage to the author of the spell or to any one else. After musing on the compromise of antagonist principles throughout universal nature, he was thus taught the necessity for reconciling the hostile propensities of his own bosom—the one beckoning him to tread the dizzy confines which separate the transcendental from the nonsensical, the other inviting him to drag the river with his sons, or to read L'Allegro to his daughters. Peace was concluded on better terms for the father than the visionary. Each passing year found

him a plainer-spoken man, more alive to sublunary thoughts, and more engaged in active duties. Yet to the last, like some of the great painters of his day, he eschewed transparent lights and clear outlines, and loved to delineate objects through a haze.

There is a great want of a philosophical essay on the choice, the benefits, and the treatment of Hobby Horses. It would form a connecting link between the Libraries of Useful and of Entertaining Knowledge. Scarcely a man (the made-up and artificial man alone excepted) who could not be laid under contribution for such a work. Our learned and amiable recluse might have a whole chapter to himself. When it was not a field-day with him, and he had no exercises in divinity to perform, he would descend from the great horse, and amble about to his heart's content on a favourite pad, which, however, it was his whim to dress in the housings of his tall charger, and to train to the same paces. To extract the marrow of Church history was his appointed duty—to construct schemes of physiology his habitual pastime. Uncle Toby never threw up his intrenchments, nor “my father” his theories with greater spirit. He worked out, at least on paper, a complete plan of education, founded on a diligent survey of the functions of the brain; and composed an elaborate system, exhibiting the future condition of man when disencumbered of those viscous and muscular integuments, which in the present life serve as a kind of sheath to protect the sentient mind within, from the intensities of delight or of pain to which, without such a shelter, it would be exposed. Too wise ever to become frivolous or vapid, his wisdom was not of that exquisite mould, which exhibits itself in unimpaired lustre, in a state of gaiety and relaxation. Whatever might be his theme, his march was still the same, stately, studied, and wearisome. His theological and his cerebral inquiries were all conducted in the same sonorous language. Period rolled after period in measured cadence, page answered page in scientific harmony. This paragraph challenged applause for its melodious swell, that for its skillful complexity, the next for the protracted simile with which it brought some abstruse discussion to a picturesque and graceful close. Any of them would have furnished Dr. Blair with illustrations of his now-forgotten rules for writing well; and exceedingly fine writing it was. But,

after all, one's hobby might as well be put into a waltz as into the grand menage. It is only in his own easy natural shuffling gait that the animal shows to advantage. So kind-hearted, however, and so full of matter was our rider, that the most fastidious critic could hardly think twice of such a trifle.

The lines had fallen to him in pleasant places, and his gratitude to Providence expressed itself in depicting his goodly heritage for the delight and the emulation of others. Not, indeed, that he laid bare the sacred recesses of his home to the vulgar gaze, by publishing journals, confessions, or an autobiography. He would just as soon have surrendered his body to the surgeons for dissection as an *anatomie vivante*. But reversing the familiar method of conveying moral precepts under the veil of narrative, he told unconsciously in a didactic form, a story as beautiful as it was true. An English country house was the scene: the *dramatis personæ* parents, enjoying competency, health, and leisure, very learned and amiable withal, and wise above measure, with a troop of boys and girls as intelligent and docile as they were gay: the plot or fable being made up of the late, though complete development of their various mental powers.

That such a house did exist, and that beneath its tranquil shelter many a youth and many a maid were trained to improve and to adorn the land which gave them birth, no reader of the book called "Home Education" will for a moment doubt; or at least none who has ever invented a theory or revolved an apophthegm while watching the play or listening to the prattle of his own children. But that, north or south of Trent, such another is to be found must be disbelieved, until a commission of married men, of six years' standing at the least, shall have ascertained and reported the fact. What with managing constituents and turnpike trusts, writing sermons and prescriptions, meeting the hounds to-day and the quarter sessions to-morrow, an English country gentleman, whether clerical or laic, who should undertake the late development of the "Ideality," and the "Conceptive Faculty," and the "Sense of Analogy," of his children, though he should address himself to "the intuitive faculties" alone, and those "gently stimulated by pleasurable emotions," would, in a myriad of cases to one, end in something very different from the promised result of "putting their minds into a condition of intellectual



opulence." Adam was earning the bread of his sons by the sweat of his brow, while they were learning to keep sheep, and to till the ground, and such has ever since been the condition of his descendants. Here and there may perhaps be found an Eden such as our author inhabited and described, where, exempt from the cares of earth, and cultivating a correspondence between the human and the Divine mind, fathers such as he was are training their offspring to apprehend truth, to impart truth, and to discover truth. A lovely scene it was, and drawn with all the earnest pathos of paternal love. But as the Belvidere Apollo differs from an honest sportsman of our days, or the Godfrey of Tasso from an officer of Her Majesty's Life-Guards, even such was the difference between our rural philosopher and the ten thousand respectable gentlemen over the walls of whose country mansions fertile vines have crept, and whose tables are thickly set with olive branches: though amongst them may be found many double first-class men, and here and there a senior wrangler.

Thus flowed on a life which kings might have envied, sages approved, and poets sung, if in these later days those illustrious personages had not become very chary of such favours. Things looked as if the village sculptor and versifier would be the sole guardians of his posthumous fame, and he known to posterity only as one of those best of fathers and of men, over whose remains the yew tree in the neighbouring church-yard stood sentinel. Such a catastrophe would have suited well with his quiet scorn of terrestrial glory, but ill with those high-wrought graces of style in which he was accustomed to express it. Religion and philosophy may diminish the danger, but hardly the strength, of the universal craving for the esteem of our fellow-mortals. He knew and had reflected much; and it was his duty to impart it. He had discovered many current errors, and it behooved him to expose them. His flow of language was choice and copious, and philanthropy itself suggested that he should awaken all its melodies. If renown would follow, if a frivolous world would admire her monitor, if his labours of love should win for him the regard of the discerning few, or even the applause of the unthinking many, why, he was too benevolent, too honest, and too wise, either to despise the recompense, or to affect to depreciate it; and thus he became an author.



To "exhibit at one view the several principal forms of spurious or corrupted religion," had for many years been his chosen task. But art is long, and life short; and the stately edifice pictured in his imagination, was abandoned for a range of structures of humbler form, though better suited to the taste and habits of his age. An Essay on Enthusiasm prepared the way for another on Fanaticism, to which were destined to succeed treatises on Superstition, on Credulity, on the Corruption of Morals, and on Skepticism. Of this series, the four last never saw the light; the place assigned in the programme to Superstition having been usurped by Spiritual Despotism, and by a succession of tracts drawn up in battle array against those of the Oxford Catholics, under the title of "Primitive Christianity." Thus was produced an incomplete course of lectures on Ecclesiastical Nosology—a science which, however inviting, could not exercise an undisputed influence over one who lived in such scenes, and who was blessed with such associates as we have mentioned.

Nothing more easy than the transition from the spiritual diseases of the world to the mental health of his own nursery—from the contemplation of souls infected by the taint of their mortal prison-house, to a meditation on immortal spirits, whose corporeal shrines shall eternally enhance their purest joys and participate in the discharge of their most exalted duties. As when a Teutonic commentator, a man egregious and most celebrated, long harassed with the arrangement of some intractable chorus, escaping at length from its anapæstic or ditrochæan bondage into an excursus on the dress and ornaments of the Grecian stage, revels and lingers there, rejoicing in his freedom, and recruits his strength for new metrical labours; so our author, (whose Homeric style, it may be perceived, is contagious,) averting his thoughts from the sad legends of human weakness, which fill so large a space in the history of the Christian Church, would take refuge in the paradise of home, or in musings on that eternal rest of which earth has no other type so vivid or so endearing. On his "Natural History of Enthusiasm," faithful critics (ourselves among the number) pronounced a sentence, which, if not altogether flattering to the self-esteem of the historian, may yet have contributed to that improvement in the art of authorship which is to be distinctly traced in his later books.

Time and space would fail us, should we now endeavour to estimate all his labours in that branch of moral or religious science which he undertook to cultivate. But the book called "Religious Despotism," demands at least a passing notice. Incomparably the most vigorous offspring of his brain, it has had, like some portionless younger brother, to struggle on against unmerited neglect; the whole patrimony of praise having been seized upon by the book on Enthusiasm, in virtue of the law of literary primogeniture. An ill-chosen title, the want of lucid order, and a grandiloquence here more than ever out of place, may partly account for this. Be the world, however, assured, that among the works on ecclesiastical polity which it has of late received with acclamation, there is not one so worthy of being reverently praised and inwardly digested.

The divisions "now so much exasperated that exist amongst us, on questions belonging to the exterior forms and the profession of religion, are of a kind that affect the Christian with inexpressible grief, the patriot with shame and dismay, and the statesman with hopeless perplexity." So says our author, and so in turn say all the disputants. But he alone, as far as our reading extends, has breathed this complaint in the true spirit of Christian kindness, united to a catholic breadth of capacity and of knowledge.

What are the legitimate foundations, and what the proper limits of sacerdotal authority?—questions proposed and answered by many a polemic, religious and political; and sometimes, though very rarely, discussed in the spirit of a philosophy more pure and elevated than is usually imbibed by such controversialists. How this debate was managed by a man of robust sense, profound learning, and still deeper piety, who, though too upright and too fastidious to surrender himself to the extravagances of any party, had a wide personal acquaintance with the modes of thinking and with the habits of all, would be well worth the knowing, even if that knowledge did not contribute to our more immediate object of delineating his literary character. Ample, however, must be the space in which to make a complete exhibition, or even an exact epitome of his doctrines. It will be enough to indicate such of them as he seems to have regarded with peculiar attachment.

Religion, an indestructible element of our nature, may exist as a system of superstitious terrors; in which case the

abject humiliation of the proselyte will give the measure of the authority of the priest. Or it may exist as a genuine revelation from Heaven; but even so, the fluctuating fashions of the world will exalt or depress the powers of the ministers of the purest faith. The Greek patriarch, after the manner of his nation, scaled such heights of authority as subtlety and eloquence could command for him. The successors of Peter triumphed by force of the same audacious energy which had before given empire to the Cæsars. Boasting of her liberties, the Gallican Church was content to lose every thing *hormis l'honneur*.

In England, ecclesiastical despotism had to encounter the inflexible spirit of our Barons and Burgesses; while *Demos*, the arch-tyrant of the United States, supreme over all rulers, temporal and spiritual, lays alike on president and priest his inexorable command to progress—urging them both onward in the same impatient career. But, be the influence of national character on sacerdotal dominion what it may, the state must either set limits to the power of the church or must bow to her supremacy. Hands which grasp the keys, will, if unfettered, soon usurp the sceptre and the sword. Religion unites men in societies, resting on a basis more profound, and yet agitated by excitements more intense and frequent, than any other. Between a theocracy administered by the sacred order, and a church at once restrained and protected by law, there is no middle resting-place. “Alliance” is but a lofty euphemism for allegiance.

Competency and independence will still be the desire and the aim of the human heart, whether it beats under the corslet, the ermine, or the surplice. To refuse to ecclesiastics the gratification of this wish, is as imprudent as it is vain. While pointing the way to heaven, they are still our fellow-travellers in the ways of earth. Abandon them to the spontaneous support of their disciples, and there is an end of the mental composure necessary for their arduous duties, and there is an inlet to flatteries and to frauds, the most repugnant to their hallowed character. On such a system imposts are laid on the poor and the feeble-minded, and evaded by the wealthy and the supercilious. For the indigent no provision is made. All the more permanent and catholic schemes of Christian philanthropy are unheeded; and the greatest of all social interests is intrusted

to mere impulses to which no rational lawgiver would confide the least. History records the result of this experiment, as tried not in the narrow form of the modern congregational system, but on the broader principle of thus creating funds to support the pastors of a province or a state. Constantine may have been the nursing father, but he was also the resolute reformer of the Church. Her primitive sanctity was impaired, not by the privileges he conferred, but by the rapacious habits on which the exercise of that imperial bounty entitled and enabled him to impose some restraint. Of the alliance which he negotiated, the essential condition was, that the Christian hierarchy should be defended by law in the possession of the wealth assigned to them, and should be prohibited by law from augmenting it by unworthy means.

Men uniting in religious fellowship must also be united by some scheme of internal organization. These societies must be made up of the teachers and the taught, of the governors and the governed. They should be rather families, in which there is much to be learned, to be borne, and to be done, than clubs held together by a revocable will for the enjoyment in common of equal privileges.

Absolute monarchy would be the most perfect scheme of civil, and absolute prelacy of ecclesiastical government, if kings and prelates were absolutely wise and just. Synods, parliaments, franchises, constitutional rights, inestimable as securities against social evils, are yet but proofs of that degeneracy which, in certain respects, they contribute to enhance. They impede the growth and the expansion of some of the noblest of our moral sentiments; such as loyalty, veneration, humility, and mutual confidence. Now, in these and similar feelings, the very essence of religion consists. Whatever ecclesiastical regimen most conduces to their development, is that which a Christian society would spontaneously assume. Episcopal rule is the "primitive form" in which pure Christianity appears among men: independency that which it acquires when men have learned to distrust each other. Patriarchal command and filial duty wait on that perfect love which casteth out fear; self-assertion and the impatience of control, on that restless fear which casts out love. Government and the graduated subordination of ranks would have been a divine ordinance, even if it had not been expressly

and in terms promulgated as such. It may be read in the inspired volume; but it may be discerned almost as clearly in the natural distinctions of mankind. God himself has consecrated some to the royal, some to the episcopal, and some to the priestly office; and whether the world will hear or will forbear, that high commission is still extant in unimpaired force, and may never be disobeyed with impunity.

As in the domestic, so in the ecclesiastical household, the higher functions ought to be undertaken by those to whom that eminence is due, on the ground of superior endowments, whether natural or acquired. How to adjust the claims of rival candidates, is the great practical difficulty. Who shall decide which members of the Church shall be raised to the clerical office, and which shall constitute the laity. Apostolical example, in this case, affords no rule for the guidance of later ages. When as yet congregations were to be formed, the choice of teachers inevitably belonged to the first promulgators of the faith. Neither will the sacred text yield an explicit answer to this inquiry. Nothing more studiously indefinite than the language of Paul, of Peter, and of John, regarding the external institutes of Christianity. Such outward forms they decidedly left in an inchoate and plastic state, to be moulded to the varying exigencies of mankind in different political societies.

From their writings, and from the practice of their immediate successors, may, however, be deduced one general principle. It is, that in the government of the Church the monarchical and the popular elements should be combined and harmonized. Yet to divorce them from each other is the common aim, though by opposite methods, both of those whose boast is their apostolical succession, and of those who exult in the freedom of religious democracy. Here both parties are untrue to their own cardinal maxims. The antiquarian divines explore their records in vain for a pretext for excluding the laity from a voice in deliberation, in discipline, and in the election of their bishops, priests, and deacons. On this subject they therefore decline, and shrink from their favourite and customary appeal to tradition. The pure biblicists search the inspired canon with equally ill success, for one word to show that the pastor should be the mere stipendiary and dependant of his flock, subsisting on



their bounty, subject to their will, and removeable at their pleasure. They therefore refuse in this discussion to admit "the Bible, and the Bible alone" as their complete and all-sufficient guide of conduct. Sacerdotal power and popular control, which, by a well adjusted equipoise, should mutually sustain the spiritual edifice, are thus, by their ill-judging partisans, arrayed as antagonist, or rather as hostile forces. In one direction the march of despotism, in another the progress of anarchy, is advanced by those to whom both should be equally abhorrent, as being equally opposed to their common faith.

How copious the eloquence with which the author of "Spiritual Despotism" would have disclaimed all responsibility for the opinions thus ascribed to him, and for the language in which they have been expressed! With what exuberant artifices of style would he have insisted that the mature results of the patient studies of his life, are not to be understood by any less laborious method than that of reading and meditating the volume in which he has himself recorded them! No protest could be more reasonable. Of such a book a fair estimate cannot be formed from the hasty sketch of an inconsiderable fragment, selected not as being more impressive than the rest, but it may be as indicating doctrines for which, as very nearly coinciding with his own, the abbreviator might desire to win at least a transient notice. Gratitude to him who has brought to the birth thoughts with which the mind has been long, though silently teeming, may overflow in unmeasured praise. Little, however, is hazarded in announcing this work as the most original, comprehensive, and profound contribution which any living writer in our own country has made to the science of ecclesiastical polity. They whose delight is in the transcendental and the obscure, who pine for theories which elude their grasp, and believe that to strain is to expand the mind, will judge otherwise. For once our author must submit to the reproach, perhaps the unwelcome reproach, of being perfectly intelligible. Drawing outlines of history with a hand as bold and free as that of Guizot, conversant with principles as recondite as those of Coleridge, and animated by the same chaste and fervent piety which hallows the speculations of Mr. Gladstone, his was the further praise of bringing to the encounter, with the loftiest abstractions, that athletic good sense which disdains to enlarge itself by

looming through a fog. Master, as he was of the *chiar' oscuro*, the love of truth was too strong in him for the love of art. Addressing mankind on a subject of urgent and solemn interest, he rose so far above the fashions of his age, as to shun the region over which sublimity and nonsense hold divided rule; remembering, perhaps, that it has never been frequented by any of the master spirits of the world; and that, even amongst men divinely inspired, he who was at once the greatest and the most deeply learned, had preferred to speak five words to edification than to speak ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. To grapple with principles of the widest span, without requiring so much as a momentary repose in the lap of mysticism, is an admirable power. To refuse on such an occasion the but too familiar and ready aid of that narcotic, is a real, though an unobtrusive virtue.

As the unwonted self-denial of thin potations will sometimes appear to him who has made it to deserve the reward of a generous cup of sack, so he who had thus submitted himself to the penance of tracing, in distinct and legible characters, the progress of spiritual despotism, his task accomplished, soared away into other contemplations more agreeable to himself at least, because more abstruse, which he revealed to the lower world under the enigmatical title of "Saturday Evening." He sought relief and found it, when ordinary mortals find little else than lassitude; for, in the full sense of that profound expression, he was a man spiritually minded. His assent to Christianity was no faint admission that the balance of conflicting arguments inclined in favour of that belief. It was a conviction rooted in the inmost recesses of his mind; the germinating principle of the devout thoughts which grew spontaneously in that well cultured and fertile soil. To measure the heights and the depths of the truths revealed or intimated in the inspired volume, was at once the solace and the habitual labour of his life.

From the strife of politicians, the wonders of art, and the controversies of the learned, he turned away to ponder on the hopes and prospects of the Christian Church, on her lapse from original purity, on the fellowship and isolation of her members, the limits of revealed knowledge, the dissolution and the perpetuity of our nature, and the modes of our future existence. Incapable of acquiescing tamely in

any of the dogmatic systems of divinity, (all alike definite, cold, sterile, and earth-born,) he aspired to reach that upper region which the pure light visits, and whence alone it is reflected in all its purity. There he proposed to himself and handled problems of which Butler might have surmised the solution, and Milton evolved the latent glories. But he was attempting to scale eminences where the mightiest become conscious of their weakness, and the boldest imagination is taught the penury of her resources. To throw some unsteady and precarious lights on such themes, should limit the ambition, as it will unavoidably terminate the success, of all intellects but those of the most exalted order. Yet how abstain altogether from such endeavours to explore things undreamt of in our popular theology, when the ear has been trained to hear, however indistinctly, the undertones of the Divine voice, and the heart to understand, however imperfectly, the inarticulate language of the Divine government? Blessed in no vulgar degree with such perceptions, our author applied himself with reverence, and with freedom of thought, to topics which, when so examined, can never be unfruitful, though the fruits may often be unripe, and to the great majority unpalatable. Take, as an example, the following abridgment of a chapter, entitled, "The State of Seclusion:"—

From our narrow survey of the affairs of mankind, no principle of universal morals can be deduced, except as a matter of doubtful speculation and still recurring controversy, triumphant to-day, to be discarded to-morrow. Were it otherwise, the slumber of the soul, with all its attendant dreams and fantasies, must be broken. Our probationary state requires that we should exist only as the inhabitants of a narrow area, shut out from the general assembly of intelligent beings, and denied all access to those vehement and irresistible persuasions by which, with their comprehensive knowledge of the universal laws of the divine economy, they would constrain us to obedience. Within the walls of our prison-house we are condemned to grope in vain, if so we may discover the permanent tendencies and the ultimate issues of things. The great axioms of eternal virtue are rather obscured than illustrated by the complexity, the insignificance, and the obtrusive glare of those occurrences which make up national and individual history. Each man is straightened in his sphere of obser-

vation and of thought. His experience is incalculably small when compared to that of the whole human family, of which he is for the time a member. Of the events of preceding ages, he may catch some faint notices; of those of the ages to come, he lives and dies in profound ignorance. Between those who are entering and those who are about to quit this stage of existence, there are such distinctions of physical temperament as greatly intercept the tradition of knowledge from parents to their children. Geographical position, the antipathy of races, discordance of tastes, and differences of speech, contribute still further to segregate communities and their component parts. The intervention of a river, or a chain of mountains, will reduce to mute signs and gestures the language by which man holds intercourse with his fellows. Narrowing his pursuits and thoughts within a single path, the petty cares of life render him ignorant of what is passing beyond his daily walk, and unobservant of the far larger proportion of what occurs within it. So apparently inextricable is the confusion, and so many the seeming anomalies of all that falls under his personal notice, that man's existence assumes the semblance rather of a game of chance than of a system throughout which is to be traced the average result of established rules. So feeble is the faculty of generalization in most—so minute, urgent, and uniform, and yet so numerous the affairs in which they are engaged; such are the contaminations, and such the ridicule of life; so extravagant the folly in one direction, and so abject the misery in another, that the prospect open to any one of us, during his confinement in this sublunary state, is every where hedged round within narrow precincts, and bounded by a horizon as indistinct as it is near.

Yet from our prison-house we look out on populous regions of illimitable space, though forbidden to converse with their inhabitants. We perceive that, beyond the limits of our own planet, the same law of seclusion prevails. Creation does not form one continuous surface over which beings of the same order might pursue an unbroken path, but is made up of globes suspended in thin space at incalculable distances. While neighbouring worlds are thus estranged from each other, the vastness of the universe is exhibited to every percipient being within its range. Thus the isolation of man is but the development on earth of

one great law by which all nature is pervaded. Created intelligences are every where kept apart from that communion with other ranks of being, whose greater comprehensiveness of knowledge would destroy the balance of conflicting motives, and reduce the rational will to a state of unresisting subjection. Man is isolated from preceding generations, and from all but a very inconsiderable number of his own, because the comprehensive experience which he might otherwise gain of the course of human affairs, would in the same manner be destructive of his liberty of choice. Each is left to gather from his separate experience moral rules at once unobtrusive, and yet capable of sufficient proof. Wisdom does not raise her voice in the streets; she calmly offers instruction to the prudent, but does not force it on the thoughtless. The division of created minds into distinct communities, and the various methods by which the members of the same community are separated from each other, are parts of that general ordinance or system by which a certain reserve is imposed on wisdom and on virtue. Things eternal and universal are unseen; things partial and temporal are alone submitted to our observation.

Such, divested of the embellishments with which they fell from his own hand, are the meditations to which the historian of Enthusiasm has devoted one of his "Saturday Evenings." It is a loss they can ill afford. Winnowed a little further, this splendid essay (for such in the original it really is) might, without the escape of any of its essences, be exhibited in the form of one or two simple and familiar truths:—as thus:—

Moral probation is incompatible with a distinct and certain foresight of all the remote tendencies, and of all the ultimate results of our conduct. If the transient delights which allure us, and the overwhelming evils which follow in their train, were both at once revealed to the mental vision in the vivid colours and hard outlines of the naked reality, neither vice nor virtue could any longer exist among men. As probationers, we must live in the state of seclusion, that is, we must be cut off from those sources of information, which, if we had access to them, would prevent even a momentary equipoise between the present and the future—between those desires which crave immediate indulgence, and those which point to a distant but greater



good. One of the causes by which the influx of such knowledge is impeded, is the insular position of our globe in the shoreless ocean of space; and as this physical isolation of worlds seems to pervade the celestial system, we may conjecture that "seclusion is a law of the universe," and that throughout the stellar regions imperfect knowledge is made conducive to the exercise and the improvement of virtue. There is but one Being to whom we are taught to ascribe complete and inflexible rectitude, because there is but one to whom we can attribute absolute omniscience.

Inconsiderable as is the amount of genuine ore employed in this essay, and in many other parts of the collection of which it forms no unfavourable specimen, it would be difficult to refer to a more apt illustration of the ductility and the brilliance of which moral truth is susceptible. What if Selden or Pascal would have extracted into a page or two of apophthegms the essential oils of all these discourses; and what though the capacity to concentrate thought be a nobler gift than the art to diffuse it; yet may this inferior power exist in a state of rare and admirable excellence. Genuine wisdom has many tongues and many aspects, and employs each in turn to express and to promote that love of mankind which, under all her external forms, is still her animating spirit. Yet it must be confessed, that she so habitually delights in the simplest garb, that when, as in these sabbatical essays, she decks herself out in the literary fashions of the day, one may hope to be forgiven for being unaware of her presence. They are infinitely more rich in knowledge and in power than the generation of the author would confess; and yet was not that generation to blame? Under draperies adjusted with such obtrusive skill, and of so elaborate a texture, men are seldom accustomed to find real beauty, and are therefore but little disposed to search for it.

When a biographer has conducted his hero to the tomb, he usually leaves him there. To the list of excepted cases must be added that of the author of "A Physical Theory of a Future Life." In form a speculative treatise, it may be considered as substantially a narrative of his existence beyond the confines of earth, in those scenes which most men occasionally anticipate, and which many have attempted to describe; some from the ambition for immortal fame,

and some impelled by the cravings for immortal felicity. From the shelves of his well-filled library, sages and poets were summoned to contribute to the formation of this work. First, and before all, were consulted the writers of the sacred volume; of whom it may with the strictest truth be said, that they have established the triumph of good sense over the mere dreams of excited fancy. Of such dreams, none possessed a firmer hold on the Italian and Greek philosophers and their disciples, than that after death man was to pass into a state of pure incorporeity, and to be absorbed by the great Mundane Soul. Very different the teaching of the writers of the New Testament. They transferred from this world to the next the great truth—that human happiness requires not only that the mind be sound, but that it be lodged in a sound body. Irenæus and Tertullian informed our theorist that such was also the creed of the immediate successors of the Apostles. Origen taught him, that to exist as a spirit wholly detached and separate from matter, is the incommunicable attribute of the omnipresent Deity; and instructed him to understand the luciform body of the Platonic system as identical with the spiritual body of the Christian revelation.

From the same great master he learned that, without such an instrumentality, minds created and subordinate must be cut off from all commerce with external things, and become nothing more than so many inert, insulated, and contemplative entities. With these great fathers of the Church he found the rest of that venerable college in harmony—copious in their inquiries respecting the nature of good and bad demons—assigning to the angelic host the nearest possible resemblance, and to the evil spirits the utmost possible dissimilarity, to the defecated intelligences of the Aristotelic learning; the one impassive to all sensual delights, the other inhaling with an unholy relish the savoury fumes of heathen sacrifices, but both clad with material integuments, subtilized to an imponderable and indefinite tenuity. Their volumes, especially, if we remember rightly, those of Augustine, revealed to him the farther secret of the manner in which spirits inhabiting these ethereal vehicles hold intercourse with each other; and even explained the shapes in which they manifest their presence to those exquisite organs of sensation by which alone they are perceptible. Cook, or La Perouse, never

drew a plainer chart of their discoveries, than that which was thus laid open to our author of the regions of the blessed. Cuvier never examined the osseous structure of an antediluvian quadruped more closely, than the mental and physical constitution of the immortals was thus analyzed by some of those who in ancient times aspired one day to join that exalted company.

Other provinces of our author's literary dominions were yet to be explored. One contemptuous glance was given to the Koran, and to the paradise copied, as it might seem, by the Prophet, from the Aphroditan temples of Paphos or Idalia. Homer exhibited to him the illustrious dead as so many victims of the inexorable Fates against which they had contended so bravely on earth, and as agitated by passions which it was no longer permitted them to gratify. His great imitator discovered to the student, Elysian fields over which satiety reigned in eternal and undisputed sway, and which the poet himself advantageously exchanged, twelve centuries afterwards, for the outskirts of the "Inferno," with an occasional voyage of discovery through those gloomy mansions. The awful magician who placed him there lost much of his own inspiration, when, quitting the guidance of Virgil for that of Beatrice, he traversed in her company the seven heavens, and listened in the sun to the lectures of Thomas Aquinas, or received from the saints congregated in the form of an eagle in the planet Jupiter, a metaphysical comment on the mysteries of the divine decrees.

From the poets, our author next turned to the theological philosophers of his own and other countries. In Cudworth and Brucker he found the doctrines of the schools of ancient and of modern Europe in more perfect symmetry, and in greater clearness than in the works of the sages and schoolmen themselves; but cold as the latitudinarianism of the first, and dry as the antiquarian lore of the second. At length his hand rested on two volumes in which the post-sepulchral condition of man is delineated with a beauty and eloquence to which he rendered a willing, although a silent homage. One of those was the treatise of Thomas Burnett—*De Statu Mortuorum et Resurgentium*—the other, that book on the "Light of Nature," in which Abraham Tucker traverses the world to come in his atomic or vehicular state. Burnett, it may be supposed,

best knew his own strength and weakness, and judged rightly in choosing scientific or critical subjects, and in discussing them in a dead language. But to those who read his works it must ever remain a mystery that he could subject himself to such fetters, instead of yielding to the inspiration which was ever at hand to sublimate into impassioned poetry whatever exact knowledge or whatever learned inquiries might happen to engage his thoughts. Tucker, on the other hand, was a matter of fact person; happy beyond all men in the power of illustrating the obscure by the familiar; but happier still in the most benevolent and cheerful temper, and in a style which beautifully reflects the constitutional gaiety and kindness of his heart. There is a charm even in his want of method, and in the very clumsiness of his paragraphs; for each sentence bears him testimony that he is too intent on his object to think of any thing else, and that to teach controversialists to understand and to love each other was the single end for which he lived and wrote. Of his metaphysical speculations, the most original and curious is the Inquiry into the Nature and the Operation of Motives. But his excellence consists in the brightness and in the variety of the lights he has thrown round the whole circle of those topics over which natural and revealed religion exercise a common and indivisible dominion. To rid them of mere logomachies, to show how much the fiercest disputants may be unconsciously agreed, to prove how greatly Christianity is misrepresented by many of her opponents, and misunderstood by many of her friends—and, without ever assuming the preacher's office, to explain the depths of the great Christian canon of mutual love as the universal substratum of all moral truth,—this is the duty which he has undertaken, and which he executes, often successfully, and always with such courage, diligence, and vivacity, and with so unbroken a sunshine of a placid and playful temper, as to render the "Light of Nature" one of the most attractive books in our language, both to those who read to be themselves instructed on these questions, and to those who read with the view of imparting such instruction to others.

So judged Paley in the last generation; and such is manifestly the opinion of Archbishop Whateley, and of Bishop Coppleston, with many other writers of our own. Amongst the many who have drawn at this fountain, the latest would

appear to be the author of "The Physical Theory of a Future Life." Whether he in fact availed himself of the sources of information which we have indicated, or any other of the countless books which treat on the mysteries of the world to which we are all passing, is, however a fact on which it is impossible to advance beyond conjecture. The old and obsolete fashion of commencing a voyage of discovery to any *terra incognita*, by a retrospect of the success or failure of former adventurers, and the still more ancient practice of fencing round the page with references and quotations, were not without their use. It would, however, be captious to complain of the discontinuance, in a single case, of customs so generally laid aside; or to arraign an author as making an unjust pretension to the praise of originality, merely because he does not in terms disavow it. If in this new theory there is little to be found in substance with which those who are inquisitive about such matters were not already familiar, there is at least a systematic completeness and symmetry, in this scheme of a future life, unrivalled even in Abraham Tucker's vision. In order to disclose to mankind the prospect which thus awaits them, it will be necessary to convert our author's didactics into the form of a fragment of his posthumous autobiography—a freedom, for the pardon of which the necessity of the case may be urged; since it seems impossible by any other method to convey any adequate conception of a career which, dazzling as it is in itself, is still further obscured by the brilliant polish of the abstract phraseology in which it is described by him by whom, in imagination at least, it was run. He may, then, be supposed to have revealed the incidents of his immortal existence to the associates of his mortal being, in some such terms as the following:—

One universal bewilderment of thought, one passing agony, and all was still. I had emerged from the confines of life, and yet I lived. Time, place, and sensation were extinct. Memory had lost her office, and the activity of my reasoning powers was suspended. Apart from every other being, and entombed in the solitude of my own nature, all my sentient and mental faculties were absorbed and concentrated in one intense perception of self-consciousness. Before me lay expanded, as in a vast panorama, the entire course of my mortal life. I was at once the actor and the spectator of the whole eventful scene; every thought as



distinct, every word as articulate, and every incident as fresh as at the moment of their birth. The enigmas of my existence were solved. That material and intellectual mechanism of which, for threescore years and ten, I had been the subject, was laid bare, with all the mutual dependencies of the countless events, great and trivial, of my sublunary days. Grasping at length the threads of that vast labyrinth, I perceived that they had all been woven by the same Divine Artificer. At each step of the way by which I had come, I now traced the intervention of an ever watchful Providence. Complicated and perplexing as the condition of human life had formerly appeared to me, I at length discovered the great ultimate object to which each movement of that intricate apparatus had been designed to minister. I saw that the whole had been one harmonious and comprehensive scheme for purifying the affections of my nature, and invigorating them for nobler and more arduous exercises. I had gone down to Hades, and Deity was there. On earth his existence had been demonstrated. Here it was felt by a consciousness intuitive and irresistible. A prisoner in the flesh, I had been wont to adore the majesty of the Creator. A disembodied spirit, I was awake to the conviction that he exists as the perennial source of happiness, which, concentrated in his own nature, is thence diffused throughout the universe, although in degrees immeasurably distant from each other, and according to laws unsearchable by any finite understanding. Thus imbibing knowledge of myself and of Deity, and alive only to the emotions inspired by this ever-present spectacle, I became the passive recipient of influences instinct with a delight so tranquil, and with a peace so unbroken, that weariness, satiety, and the desire for change appeared to have departed from me for ever.

Change, however, awaited me. So slight and imperfect had been the alliance between my disembodied spirit and the world of matter, that, destitute of all sensation, I had lost all measure of time, and knew not whether ages had revolved, or but a moment had passed away during my isolated state of being. Heir to ten thousand infirmities, the body I had tenanted on earth had returned to the dust, there to be dissolved and re-compounded into other forms and new substances. Yet the seminal principle of that mortal frame had adhered to me; and at the appointed season there brood-

ed over it from on high a reproductive and plastic influence. Fearfully and wonderfully as I had been made when a denizen of the world, the chemical affinities, and the complex organization of my animal structure, had borne the impress of decay, of a transitory state, and of powers restricted in their free exercise. Passing all comprehension as had been the wisdom with which it was adapted to the purposes of my sublunary being, those purposes had been ephemeral, and circumscribed within precincts which now seemed to me scarcely wider than those within which the emmet plies her daily task. In the career which was now opening to me, I required a far different instrumentality to give scope to my new faculties, and to accomplish the ends to which I had learned to aspire. Emancipated from the petty cares and the mean pursuits in which, during the period of my humanity, I had been immersed, I now inhabited and informed a spiritual body, not dissimilar in outward semblance to that which I had bequeathed to the worms, but uniform in texture, homogeneous in every part, and drawn from elements blended harmoniously together, into one simple, pure, and uncompounded whole. Into such perfect unison had my mental and my corporeal nature been drawn, that it was not without difficulty I admitted the belief that I was once again clothed with a material integument. Experience was soon to convince me that such an association was indispensable to the use and to the enlargement of my intellectual and moral powers.

Emerging from the region of separate spirits into my next scene of activity and social intercourse, I found myself an inhabitant of the great luminary, around which Mercury and his more distant satellites eternally revolve. In all their unmitigated radiance were floating around me, those effulgent beams of light and heat which so faintly visit the obscure and distant planets. Everlasting day, the intense glories of an endless summer noon, rested on the numbers without number of intelligent and sentient creatures who shared with me my new abode. Incorruptible, exempt from lassitude, and undesirous of repose, they imbibed energy from rays which in the twinkling of an eye would have dissipated into thin vapour the world and all that it inherits. On that opaque globe, the principles which sustain, and those which destroy life had been engaged within me in a constant but unequal conflict. The quick-

ening spirit on earth, though continually recruited by rest and sleep, had at length yielded to the still-recurring assaults of her more potent adversaries. Here the vital powers had no foes to encounter, and demanded no respite from their ceaseless occupation. In the world below, from man the universal sovereign, to the animalcula who people a drop of turbid water, I had seen all animated things sustaining themselves by the mutual extermination of each other. In the solar sphere I found all pursuing their appointed course of duty or enjoyment, in immortal youth and undecaying vigour. Death had found no entrance, life demanded no renewal.

I anticipated the results of the observations which I gradually learned to make of the difference between solar and planetary existence; for on my entrance into this untried state of being, my thoughts were long riveted to the change which I had myself undergone. While incarcerated in my tenement of clay, I had given law to my nerves, muscles, and tendons; but they had in turn imposed restraints on me against which it had been vain to struggle. My corporeal mechanism had moved in prompt obedience to each successive mandate of my mind; but so fragile were the materials of which it was wrought, that, yielding to inexorable necessity, my will had repressed innumerable desires which, if matured into absolute volitions, would have rent asunder that frail apparatus. I had relaxed the grasp, and abandoned the chase, and thrown aside the uplifted weapon, as often as my overstrained limbs admonished me that their cords would give way beneath any increased impetus. And when the living power within me had subjected my fibres to the highest pressure which they could safely endure, the arrangement, and the relative position of my joints and muscles, had impeded all my movements, except in some circumscribed and unalterable directions. But my spiritual body, incapable of waste or of fracture, and responsive at every point to the impact of the indwelling mind, advanced, receded, rose or fell, in prompt obedience to each new volition, with a rapidity unimpeded, though not unlimited, by the gravitating influence of the mighty orb over the surface of which I passed. At one time I soared as with the wings of eagles, and at another penetrated the abysses of the deep. The docile and undestructible instrument of my will could outstrip the flight of the

swiftest arrow, or rend the knotted oak, or shiver the primeval rocks; and then, contracting its efforts, could weave the threads of the gossamer in looms too subtle and evanescent for the touch of the delicate Ariel.

While on earth I had, like Milton, bewailed that constitution of my frame which admitting to knowledge of visible objects only at one entrance, forbade me to converse with them except through the medium of a single nerve, and within the narrow limits of the retina. Had the poet's wish been granted, and if, departing from her benignant parsimony, nature had exposed his sensorium to the full influx of the excitements of which it was inherently susceptible, that insufferable glare would either have annihilated the percipient faculty, or would have quickened it to agonies unimagined even by his daring fancy. Under the shelter of that material structure which at once admitted and mitigated the light, I had in my mortal state been accustomed to point my telescope to the heavens; and, while measuring the curve described round their common centre by stars which to the unaided eye were not even disunited, I had felt how infinitely far the latent capacities of my soul for corresponding with the aspect of the exterior world transcended such powers as could be developed within me, while confined to the inadequate organs of vision afforded me by nature or by art. An immortal, I quaffed at my pleasure the streams of knowledge and of observation for which before I had thus panted in vain. I could now scan and explore at large the whole physical creation. At my will I could call my visual powers into action to the utmost range of their susceptibility; for in my new body I possessed the properties of every different lens in every possible variety of combination—expanding, dissecting, and refracting at any required angle the beams which radiated from the various substances around me, it brought me intelligence of the forms, the colours, and the movements of them all. Assisted by this optical incarnation, I could survey the luminary on which I dwelt, the globes whose orbits were concentric there, and, though less distinctly, the other solar spheres which glowed in the firmament above me. Not more clearly had I deciphered during my sojourn on earth the shapes and hues of the various beings by which it is replenished, than I now discerned the aspect and the movements of the countless species, animate and inanimate, with

which the prodigal munificence of creative will has peopled the various planetary regions.

Nor was it through the intervention of light merely, that my altered corporeity brought me into communication with the works of the Divine Architect. It attracted and combined for my study or my delight, all the vibratory movements, and all the gustatory and pungent emanations, by which the sense is aroused and gratified. Celestial harmony floated around me, and I breathed odours such as exhaled from Eden on the fresh dawn of the world's nativity. In that world, chained down by the coarse elements of flesh and blood, I had caught some transient glimpses of exterior things, through the five portals which opened—shall I say into my fortress or my prison-house? From the glorious mansion which my soul now inhabited, pervious to myself at every point, though impregnable to every hostile or unwelcome aggression, I surveyed the things around me in aspects till now unimagined. I did not merely see, and hear, taste, smell, and feel, but I exercised senses for which the languages of earth have no names, and received intimations of properties and conditions of matter unutterable in human discourse. Employing this instrument of universal sensation, the inner forms of nature presented themselves before me as vividly as her exterior types. Thus entering her secret laboratories, I was present at the composition and the blending together of those plastic energies of which mundane philosophy is content to register some few of the superficial results. Each new disclosure afforded me a wider and still lengthening measure of that unfathomable wisdom and power, with the more sublime emanations of which I was thus becoming conversant. Such was the flexibility of my spiritualized organs, that at my bidding they could absolutely exclude every influence from without, leaving me to enjoy the luxuries of meditation in profound and unassailable solitude.

While thus I passed along the solar regions, and made endless accessions of knowledge, I was at first alarmed lest my mind should have been crushed beneath the weight of her own conquests, and the whole should be merged in one chaotic assemblage of confused recollections. From this danger I was rescued by another change in my animal economy. During my planetary existence, the structure and the health of my brain had exercised a despotic autho-



rity over my intellectual powers. Then my mind laboured ineffectually over her most welcome tasks, if accident or indigestion relaxed, distended, or compressed my cerebral vessels. For the time, the tools with which she wrought were deprived of their brightness and their edge. At such seasons, (and they were frequent,) the records of past sensations, and of the thoughts associated with them, became illegible in my memory, or could be read there only in disjointed fragments. An acid on his stomach would have rendered vain the boast of Cæsar, that he could address each of his legionaries by name. Even when all my pulses were beating with regularity and vigour, the best I could accomplish was to grope backward through my store of accumulated knowledge, holding by a single thread, to which my attention was confined, and the loss of which defeated all my efforts.

How different the tablets on which my observations of the past were recorded in my spiritual body! Unconscious of fatigue, incapable of decay, and undisturbed by any of those innumerable processes essential to the conservation of mortal life, it enabled me to inscribe in indelible lines, as on some outstretched map, each successive perception, and every thought to which it had given birth. At my pleasure, I could unroll and contemplate the entire chart of my past being. I could render myself as absolutely conscious of the former, as of the present operations of my mind, and at one retrospective glance could trace back to their various fountains all the tributary streams which combined to swell the current of my immediate contemplations. Gliding over the various provinces of the solar world, and gathering in each new treasures of information, I deposited them all beyond the reach of the great spoiler, Time, in this ample storehouse of a plenary memory. With the increase of my intellectual hoard, my cravings for such wealth continuedly augmented. It was an avarice which no gains could satiate, and to the indulgence of which imagination itself could assign no limit.

I should, however, have become the victim of my own avidity for knowledge, if my ideas had still obeyed those laws of association to which, in my telluric state, they had been subject. Then it behooved my reason to exercise a severe and watchful government. When her control was relaxed, my thoughts would break loose from all legitimate

restraint. They arranged themselves into strange groups and fantastic combinations, and established with each other such alliances as whim, caprice, or accident suggested. These, once made, were indissoluble. They asserted their power but too often, in resistance to the sternest mandates of my judgment and my will. But in times of debility, of disease, or of sleep, my ideas would combine into heterogeneous masses, seething and mingling together, like the ingredients of some witch's caldron, assembled by her incantations to work out some still more potent spell. Over the whole of this intoxicating confusion presided Carnality, in all her nervous, cerebral, vascular, and other forms, and working by means of all her digestive, secretory, and assimilating processes.

No longer the inmate of a tremulous and sordid tabernacle of flesh, but inhabiting a shrine pure and enduring as her own nature, my soul was now rescued from this ignoble thralldom. Accident, appetite, lassitude, the heat and fumes of my animal laboratory, had ceased to disturb the supremacy of reason. Instead of congregating as an undisciplined host, my ideas, as in some stately procession, followed each the other in meet order and predetermined sequence—their march unobstructed by any suggestions or desires originating in my sensuous frame. I had become, not the passive recipient of thought, but the unquestioned sovereign of my own mental operations. The material organs, by the aid of which I now wrought them out, obeyed a law like that on which depends the involuntary movements of the heart and arteries, unattended by any conscious effort, and productive of no fatigue. Every increment of knowledge spontaneously assumed in my memory its proper place and relative position; and the whole of my intellectual resources fell into connected chains of argument or illustration, which I could traverse at pleasure from end to end, still finding the mutual dependence and adhesion of each successive link unbroken.

To contemplate any truth in all the relations in which it stands to every other truth, is to possess the attribute of omniscience; but, in proportion as any created intelligence can combine together her ideas in their various species, genera, classes, and orders, in the same degree is diminished the distance from the Supreme Mind, immeasurable and infinite as the intervening gulf must ever remain.

On earth I had been compelled, by the feebleness of my cerebral and nervous economy, to render my studies almost exclusively analytical. There, I had toiled to disencumber every question of whatever might obscure the view of the isolated point proposed as the end of my inquiries. Morals apart from physics, art disunited from logic, the science of numbers and of space detached from the exercise of the imaginative power, even theology itself divorced from the devout aspirations to which she tends, had each in turn engaged my earnest pursuit. But to ascend those heights from which they could be contemplated as parts of one harmonious whole—to seize and to blend together the analogies pervading the works of poets and mathematicians, of naturalists and divines—this was an attempt which convinced me how indissoluble were the fetters which riveted my soul to her sluggish associate. Set free from this bondage, and supplied with an instrument of sensation which kept pace with her own inherent activity, she found and desired no repose. Solar time is measured by the revolutions of the planetary orbs, and from the commencement to the completion of his career through the firmament, Uranus still found me engaged in some unbroken contemplation. During that interval I had completed some vast synthesis, in which were at once combined and distinguished all the various aspects under which some province of knowledge had disclosed itself to my view. In the nether world, high discourse had been held on the connexion of the sciences; but now I discovered the mutual influence, the interaction, and the simultaneous workings of their different laws. I no longer cultivated the exact sciences as a separate domain, but the most severe physical truth was revealed to me in union with the richest hues of ideal beauty, with the perfection of the imitative arts, with the pure abstractions of metaphysical thought, with narratives both historical and romantic, with the precepts of universal morals, and the mysteries of the Divine government. Ontology—vain-glorious word as used among men—the knowledge of universal being as distinct from species, and of species as harmonized in universal being, was the study which engaged the time and rewarded the labours of immortal minds animating spiritual bodies.

Let not those who boast themselves in logic, Aristotelian or Baconian, assume that their puny architecture of syllo-

gistic or inductive reasoning affords the rules by which the soul, rescued from the hinderances of a carnal corporeity, erects for herself edifices of knowledge, immovable in their base, beautiful in their proportions, and towering in splendid domes and pinnacles to the skies.

To Newton and to Pascal the theories of the vulgar geometry were as instinctively obvious as the preliminary axioms on which they rest. While yet an infant, Mozart was possessed of all those complex harmonies which a life of patient study scarcely reveals to inferior masters of his art. In my planetary existence, I had rejoiced in my habitual aptitude for physiology and historical researches, nor had I regretted the years of ceaseless toil devoted to them. Now, I discovered that in myself, as in the great men I have mentioned, the apprehensiveness of truth depended far more on the animal than the mental frame-work. Quick and vigorous in high bodily health, and sluggish and inert under the pressure of corporeal debility, I learned that logic, experiment, and calculation, had been but so many crutches to assist the movements of the halt and feeble; and that, with a physical instrumentality which study could not exhaust nor disease assail, intuition took the place of reasoning. I became rather the conscious witness than the agent of the process by which consequences were evolved from the premises brought under my notice.

In the society of which I had become a member, as in mundane communities, discourse was amongst the chief springs both of improvement and delight. So curiously fashioned was the integument within which my mind was enveloped, that, after the manner of an eyelid, it could either exclude the access of any external excitement, creating within me an absolute and impregnable solitude, or lay open to the immediate survey of an associate any thought or combination of thoughts which I desired to impart to him. I had acquired two distinct languages, one of visible signs, the other of audible symbols. The first was analogous to the mute dialogue which is carried on in pantomime, by gesture and the varying expressions of the countenance; though, unlike such discourse, it was exempt from all conjectural and ambiguous meanings. As in a camera obscura, my corporeal organs reflected the workings of the informing spirit; so that, like the ancient Peruvians, I could converse as by a series of



pictures, produced and shifted with instantaneous rapidity. This mode of communication served my turn when I had any occurrences to relate, or any question to discuss, of which sensuous objects formed the basis. But when phenomena purely psychological, destitute of all types in the material creation, were to be conveyed to a companion, I had audible symbols, by which every intellectual conception, and each fluctuating state of moral sentiment might be expressed as distinctly as geometrical diagrams express the corresponding ideas to which they are allied. By the intermixture of pictorial and symbolical speech, I could thus render myself intelligible throughout the whole range and compass of my mental operations, and could give utterance to all those subtle refinements of thought or of sensation, which, even amongst those who spoke the vernacular tongue of Plato, must, from the want of fit and determinate indications have either died away in silence, or have been exhaled in some mystic and unintelligible jargon. Whatever distinctness of expression the pencil or vibratory chords enabled Raphael or Handel to give to their sublime but otherwise ineffectual conceptions, I had thus the power to impart to each modification of thought, and to every shade of feeling. Verbal controversies, sophistry, and all the other "idols of the cavern," had disappeared. Philosophy and her legitimate issue, wisdom, piety, and love, were cultivated and treasured up by each member of the great solar family, not as a private hoard, to minister only to his own uses, but as a fund universally communicable, and still augmenting by constant interchange.

It is difficult, or impossible, to speak intelligibly, in the language of men, of the delights or of the duties of the state of being into which I had thus entered. Borne along in the vehicle of my spiritual body, I dreaded no fatigue, and was deterred by no danger in the discharge of the most arduous enterprises. Aspects of the creation, hidden from me while garmented in the gross elements of flesh and blood, now burst on my perception as light visits him who, in mature life, for the first time acquires the visual faculty. Through each new avenue of sense thus successively opened to me, my soul, with raptures such as seraphs feel, drew in from the still-expanding circumference wonder and delight, and an ever increasing consciousness of the depths of her



own being and resources. Contemplating the hidden forms and the occult mechanism of the material universe, I left behind me the problems with which physical science is conversant, and advanced to that higher philosophy which investigates the properties of spiritual agents; and to a theology, compared with which that which I had hitherto acquired was as insignificant as the inarticulate babblings of the cradle. My retrospective consciousness—for memory it can scarcely be called—spread out before me scenes, the bright, harmonious, and placid lights of which were mellowed though unobscured by distance. Misgivings as to the stability of my own opinions had fled away, as the truths with which I was engaged presented themselves to me simultaneously in their relative bearings and mutual dependence. Love, pure and catholic, warmed and expanded my heart, as thoughts wise, equitable, and benign, flowed from other minds into my own in a continuous stream; the pellucid waters of which, in the inherent transparency of our regenerate nature, no deceit could darken and no guile pollute. My corporeal fabric, now become the passive instrument of my will, importuned me with no unwelcome intrusions; but buoyant, flexible, and instinct with life and vigour, obeyed every volition, and obstructed the accomplishment of none.

Yet had I not passed into that torpid elysium of which some have dreamed, and over the descriptions of which many more have slumbered. Virtue, and her stern associate Self-control, exact obedience not from the denizens of earth alone, but from the rational inhabitants of every province of the universal empire. With each accession of knowledge and of mental power, my view became continually wider and more extended of that gulf, which stretching out in measureless infinitude, separates the Source of Being from the most exalted of his intelligent offspring. My affiance in the Divine wisdom and rectitude, reposing on foundations deep and firm in proportion to my larger acquaintance with the ways of Providence, was still necessary to sustain my trembling spirit as I meditated on the mysteries of the Divine government. For, within the reach of my observation, were discernible agonizing intensities of suffering, abysses of pollution and of guilt, attesting the awful powers both of endurance and of activity of minds ejected from the defences, and despoiled of the narcotics,

once afforded them by their animal structure. Awakened to a sense of their inherent though long-slumbering energies, they were captives. Exposed to every painful excitement by which the sentient faculty can be stimulated, they were naked. Reading on the face of nature inscriptions till now illegible, they saw in them their own condemnation. Remembering each incident of their former existence, they found in each fresh aliment for despair. Disabused of the illusions of sophistry and self-love, truth shed on them the appalling glare of inevitable light. Interchanging thoughts without the possibility of disguise, every foul and malignant desire diffused among them a deadly contagion. Destitute of any separate wants or interests, their bodies could no longer minister to them the poor relief of an alternation of distress. The reluctant and occasional spectator of such woes, I found in faith, and hope, and meek adoration, the solace which my labouring spirit required—a task commensurate with my now elevated powers, though the firmest and the holiest of mortals, while yet detained in his tenelement of flesh, would have been crushed and maddened beneath the burden of that fearful sight.

In the schools of the world, I had wandered in the endless mazes of fate and free-will, and the origin of evil. An inhabitant of the great celestial luminary, I became aware of relations till then unheard of and inconceivable; between the Emanative Essence and the hosts of subordinate spirits, and of questions thence resulting, of such strange and mighty import, that, prostrating myself before the wisdom and benevolence of the Most High, I was still compelled, in reverential awe, to acknowledge how inscrutable even to my expanded capacity was the thick darkness which shrouds his secret pavilion.

Nor were there wanting tasks, which summoned to the utmost height of daring the most courageous of the inhabitants of the sphere to which I had been translated. Glorious recompense was to be won by deeds such as immortal beings only could undertake or meditate. Ministers of the Supreme, we braved at his bidding the privation of all other joys in the delight of prompt obedience to his will. We waged with his enemies fierce conflicts, and exposed ourselves to ills, intense during their continuance, in proportion to the exquisite sensibilities of our purified corporeity. Impelled by irresistible compassion, by the cravings of insa-

tiable benevolence, or by the vehement desire to obtain or to impart tidings affecting the happiness of our own or of other orders of thinking beings, our active powers, with all our resources of constancy, magnanimity, and prudence, were called into habitual exercise; nor were there wanting dignities to be attained, or sceptres to be won, as the meet reward of illustrious achievements.

When Astolpho descended on the hippogriff from his lunar voyage, his first employment was to disenchant the infuriate knight, on whose deliverance he had been bent when an ill-timed curiosity led him so far a-field. Even so, returning from the solar sphere to which the theory of a future life has unexpectedly conducted us, we must dissolve the fiction under which we have thus far proceeded, and restore the theorist himself to his sublunary life, which he is so well able to enjoy and to improve. No longer the imaginary biographers either of his terrestrial or his celestial career, but mere contemporary critics, we must exempt him from all responsibility for so much as a single word of this narrative of his immortal existence. It exhibits, with at least no intentional inaccuracy, the substance of anticipations, which, if regarded but as a chapter in some new Atlantis, might be borne with as indulgently as other Utopian discoveries, which the world has been none the worse for contrasting with the genuine but vapid pleasures of this transitory state. That a veil absolutely impenetrable conceals from us the realities of that condition into which all the successive generations of men have passed, and into which we are following them, no one will seriously dispute. But neither can it be denied that to penetrate that dark abyss is at once a desire which has been felt, and an attempt which has been made by every race, nay almost by every individual of our species.

If Scipio had his dream of colloquies after death with the wise and good of all ages, the Esquimaux has his heaven where seal-skins may be procured in placid seas, and undying lamps are fed with inexhaustible supplies of the odorous grease of bears. Mahomet promised his Arabian converts "rivers of incorruptible water and rivers of milk, the taste whereof changeth not; gardens planted with shady trees, in each of which shall be two flowing fountains; couches, the linings whereof shall be of thick silk interwoven with gold, and beauteous damsels, refraining their

eyes from beholding any but their spouses, having complexions like rubies and pearls, and fine black eyes." The stream can rise no higher than the fountain. Our ideas of immortal good are but amplifications of our mortal enjoyments. To sublimate our conceptions of felicity, by associating together all innocent and not incompatible delights, and by subtracting from them every alloy of pain, satiety, and languor, is to create for ourselves the only heaven with the contemplation of which hope can be sustained and activity invigorated. He who carefully surveys the elysium which reason or imagination has laid out and planted for him in the next world, will acquire far better acquaintance with the "happy gardens" to which choice or fortune has directed him in this. Judged by this standard, and giving him credit for having made his public confessions with entire candour, the author of the "Theory of a Future Life" may be esteemed a wise and happy man—wise, because he has no fear of acknowledging to himself or to others the dependence of his spiritual on his animal economy, and affects no superhuman disdain of mere bodily gratifications; and happy, because his felicity consists in bringing the body into that unresisting servitude to the mind, without which freedom and serenity are but empty words. Such as is his paradise in the highest conceivable degree, such in the highest attainable degree must be his earthly Eden. Dismiss it if you will as a midsummer night's dream; yet must it be confessed that it is such a dream as could visit no slumbers but those of one whose fancy was pure from sensual defilement, and whose intellect had been trained to active exercise and to close self-observation. Or, give the theorist credit for nothing more than having skilfully selected the most alluring possibilities of future good from the many celestial schemes with which the poetry and the poetical prose of all ages abounds, and still it will be true that the choice has been guided by opinions such as every one would wish to adopt, and by tastes which in our better moments we should all desire to gratify. The time subtracted, for such visions, from the scarcely more substantial delights among which we are living, will send us back to the cares of life, not less fitted resolutely to endure them, and to the pleasures of life, not less prepared wisely to enjoy them.

Style in literature is like manner in society—the super-



ficial index, which all can read, of internal qualities which few can decipher. If the author of these books had cared, or had been able, to write with ease and simplicity, or had he disguised his meaning under spasmodic contortions, or had he talked over these grave matters in the tone of a blunt and sagacious humorist, or had he dissolved them in religious sentiment, or flattened them down to the level of a monotonous orthodoxy; in short, had he either risen to the graces of nature, or condescended to those of affectation, he would have had more numerous and enthusiastic admirers. Language in his hands is an instrument of wonderful volume, flexibility, and compass; but produces harmonies of such recondite elaboration, that the sense aches for the even flow of a few plain words quietly taking their proper places. Felicitous expression is an excellent thing in its season; but serve up a whole octavo full of exquisite sentences, and neither the guest nor the cook himself can clearly tell what the repast is made of. In the works of the historian of Enthusiasm, as in those of Dr. Channing, penury and affluence of thought are made to look so like each other, that they must be undressed in order to be distinguished; and while he is making out which is which, the courteous reader is apt to lose his courtesy. In proportion as he is the more profound thinker of the two, the Englishman is the more to be upbraided for the perverse ingenuity which thus mars his own success. Objects so elevated as his, should not have been exposed to such hazard. What those objects are has already been partly explained, but they demand additional illustration.

Secluded from the worlds of business and of literature, but a keen observer of both, and viewing all sublunary things in their bearing on the eternal welfare of mankind, our author mourned over the low estate of theology amongst us, and of those higher intellectual pursuits with which theology maintains an indissoluble connexion. We are constrained to doubt whether his regrets are as wisely indulged as they are eloquently expressed.

Christianity is for the daily use of homely people. Precepts affecting all the happiness of this life, and doctrines involving all the interests of the next, are not to be delivered in that honeyed discourse which steepes the soul in self-oblivion. When truth appears amongst mankind in her severe and native majesty, she rejects the services of her ac-



customed handmaids, erudition, poetry, rhetoric, philosophy, and criticism. Eloquence alone attends her, but it is an eloquence of which the mere words are unheeded—a weapon of such edge and temper as to be irresistible in the grasp of the feeblest hand.

And feeble indeed are many of those which attempt to draw this Durindana from the scabbard. Malignity itself cannot accuse our pulpits and theological presses of beguiling us by the witchcraft of genius. They stand clear of the guilt of ministering to the disordered heart the anodynes of wit or fancy. Abstruse and profound sophistries are not in the number of their offences. It is a mere calumny, to accuse them of lulling the conscience to repose by any Syren songs of imagination. If the bolts of inspired truth are diverted from their aim, it is no longer by enticing words of man's wisdom. Divinity fills up her weekly hour by the grave and gentle excitement of an orthodox discourse, or by toiling through her narrow round of systematic dogmas, or by creeping along some low level of schoolboy morality, or by addressing the initiated in mythic phraseology; but she has ceased to employ lips such as those of Chrysostom or Bourdaloue. The sanctity of sacred things is lost in the familiar routine of sacred words. Religion has acquired a technology, and a set of conventional formulas, torpifying those who use and those who hear them. Her literature also bears the impress of an age in which the art of writing has well-nigh proved fatal to the power of thinking; when the desire to appropriate gracefully has superseded the ambition to originate profoundly; when the commercial spirit envelops and strangles genius in its folds; when demigods and heroes have abandoned the field; and the holiest affections of the heart die away in silence; and the ripest fruits of the teeming mind drop ungathered into the reaper's bosom;—an age of literary democracy and intellectual socialism, in which no bequests are made to remote posterities, and no structures are rising to command and break the universal mediocrity.

From the retirement which he knows so well how to describe and to enjoy, our author casts a mournful gaze round this dreary horizon. Acquainted, perhaps, but too distinctly with the religious parties of his native land—their infirmities and their faults, he longed for the advent of a more catholic spirit, of a more intense and unostentatious

piety; and of theological studies animated by some nobler impulse than the hire of booksellers or the praise of ephemeral critics. By expostulation and by example he has endeavoured thus to regenerate the national character. Nor are the qualifications which he has devoted to this enterprise of an ordinary kind. Measured by Etonian and Christchurch standards, he may not be entitled to a place amongst accomplished scholars; but he possesses stores of knowledge which might atone, could such guilt admit of expiation, even for the crime of a false quantity. Familiar with the elements, at least, of all physical science, and intimately conversant with ecclesiastical history, he has explored the enigmas of the human heart, even too deeply for his own repose. His bosom yearned, and his mind toiled for the happiness of mankind; but his labours would seem not to be well sustained by the cheering influence of hope. He loves children, for they are as yet exempt from the prevailing degeneracy; and the face of nature, for it reflects the creative intelligence; and books, for they are the depositories of human wisdom; and the universal church, for it is the ark freighted with the best treasures, and charged with the destinies of our race. Man also he loves, but with feelings pensive if not melancholy, and fastidious even when most benignant. In his many books, there is not a tinge of spleen; but they exhibit that disgust for the follies and the vices of the world, which with some is the aliment of satire, with others a fascination alluring them to the very evils they despise, with a few, amongst whom our author must take his place, at once a summons to exertion and a motive to sadness.

Casting off these depressing influences, he has devoted all the resources of a comprehensive understanding, and all the affections of a benevolent heart, to correct the general debasement, and to exhibit a model of those higher pursuits to which he would reclaim his generation. Enthusiasts, fanatics, spiritual despots, sciolists in education—pastors who slumber within the fold, and the robbers who spoil it, form a confederacy, the assailant of which should be encouraged by the gratitude of all good men. If the soul of William Cowper has transmigrated into any human frame, it is that of the historian of Enthusiasm. Not, indeed, that the poet has found a successor in the magic art of establishing a personal and affectionate intimacy between

himself and his readers. There is no new fire-side like that of Olney round which we can gather; nor any walks like those of Western Underwood, of which we are the companions; nor a heart at once broken and playful, whose sorrows and amusements are our own; nor are we surrounded by a family group, with tame hares, spaniels, bird-cages, and knitting-needles, as familiar to us as those of our own boyhood, and almost as dear,—each in turn reflecting the gentle, thoughtful, elevated mind of him to whom they belonged, in all its vicissitudes of despondency and hope, of grave wisdom, and of mirth as light and pure as that of infancy. This is the high prerogative of genius, addressing mankind at large through the vernacular idiom of one land in the universal language of all.

But Stamford Rivers, the dwelling-place of the anonymous writer of these volumes, has given birth to a succession of efforts to exalt the national character, which might vie with those of Olney and of Weston in piety and earnestness, in genuine freedom of thought, in the relish for domestic pleasures, and for all the innocent delights of life, in the filial love of God, and the brotherly love of man. Learning and logical acumen, and a certain catholicity of mind, which the poet neither possessed nor needed, impart to the works of the essayist a charm, without which it is vain, in these days, to interfere in the debates which agitate society. There is a charm, too, even in his distaste for the pursuits most in request amongst us; for it springs from the grandeur of the ideal excellence by which his imagination is possessed. Omniscience, though veiling its intimations in the coarse mantle of human language, will still emit some gleams of that radiance which illumines the regions of the blessed; and these he would reverently gather and concentrate. There is in Christianity an expansive power, sometimes repressed but never destroyed; and that latent energy he strives to draw forth into life and action. Those mysteries which shroud the condition and the prospects of our race, however inscrutable to the slaves of appetite, are not absolutely impervious to a soul purified by devout contemplation; and to these empyreal heights he aspires at once to point and to lead the way. To him whose foot is firmly planted on the eternal verities of Heaven, there belong motives of such force, and a courage so undaunted, as should burst through all resistance; and

he calls on those who enjoy this high privilege to assert their native supremacy above the sordid ambition, the frivolities, and the virulence of the lower world. The voice thus raised in expostulation will die away, not unheeded by the interior circle he addresses, nor unblessed by a meet recompense; but unrewarded, we fear, by the accomplishment of these exalted purposes. Eloquent as is the indignation with which our anonymous monitor regards the low level to which divine and human literature has fallen amongst us, and mean as is his estimate of the pursuits with which the men of his own days are engaged, a hope may perhaps, without presumption, be indulged, that less fastidious and not less capable judges will pronounce a more lenient sentence on us and on our doings.

In the great cycle of human affairs there are many stages, each essential to the consummation of the designs of Providence, and each separated by broad distinctions from the rest. They whose province it is to censure, and they whose desire it is to improve their age, will never find their sacred fires extinct from the mere want of fuel. History and theory are always at hand with humiliating contrasts to the times we live in. That men have been better or might be better than they are, has been true since the first fathers of our race returned to their native dust, and will still be true as long as our planet shall be inhabited by their descendants. But below the agitated surface of the ocean, under-currents are silently urging forward, on their destined path, the waters of the mighty deep, themselves impelled by that Power which none may question or resist. Human society obeys a similar influence. Laws as anomalous in appearance, as uniform in reality, as those which direct the planetary movements, determine the present state, and regulate the progress of commonwealths, whether political, literary, or religious. Christianity demands the belief, and experience justifies the hope, that their ultimate tendency is towards the universal dominion of piety and virtue. But it is neither pious nor rational to suppose, that this consummation can be attained by any sequence of identical causes constantly working out similar effects. The best generations, like the best men, are those which possess an individual and distinctive character. A chain of splendid biographies constitutes the history of past centuries. Whoever shall weave the chronicles of our own,



must take for his staple statistics illuminated by a skilful generalization. Once every eye was directed to the leaders of the world; now all are turned to the masses of which it is composed. Instead of Newtons presiding over royal societies, we have Dr. Birkbecks lecturing at mechanics' institutes. If no Wolseys arise to found colleges like that of Christchurch, Joseph Lancaster and William Bell have emulated each other in works not less momentous at the Borough Road and Baldwin's Gardens. We people continents, though we have ceased to discover them. We abridge folios for the many, though we no longer write them for the few. Our fathers compiled systems of divinity—we compose pocket theological libraries. They invented sciences, we apply them. Literature was once an oligarchy, it is now a republic. Our very monitors are affected with the degeneracy they deplore. For the majestic cadence of Milton, and the voluptuous flow of Jeremy Taylor's periods, they substitute the rhetorical philosophy, invented some fifty years since, to counter-vail the philosophical rhetoric of the French Revolution; and put forth, in a collection of essays for the drawing-room, reproofs which the hands of Prynne would have moulded into learned, fierce, and ponderous folios.

It is impossible to prevent—is it wise to bewail, this change in our social and intellectual habits? During the inundations of the Nile, the worship of the mysterious river ceased, and no hymns were heard to celebrate its glories. Idolatry lost its stay, and imagination her excitement; but the land was fertilized. Learning, once banked up in universities and cathedrals, is now diffused through shops and factories. The stream, then so profound and limpid, may now, perhaps, be both shallow and muddy. But is it better that the thirst of a whole nation should be thus slaked, or that the immortals should be quaffing their nectar apart in sublime abstraction from the multitude? There is no immediate and practicable reconciliation of these advantages. Genius, and wit, and science, and whatever else raises man above his fellows, must bend to the universal motives of human conduct. When honour, wealth, public gratitude, and the sense of good desert, reward those who teach elementary truth to the people at large, the wisest and the best will devote to that office powers, which, in a different age, would have been conse-



crated to more splendid, though not perhaps to more worthy undertakings.

In the state of letters, there is no maintaining a polity in which the three elements of power are blended together in harmonious counterpoise. There a monarch infallibly becomes a despot, and a democracy subjugates to itself whatever else is eminent, or illustrious. Divines, poets, and philosophers, addressing millions of readers and myriads of critics, are immediately rewarded by an applause, or punished by a neglect, to which it is not given to mortal man to be superior or indifferent. Inform the national mind, and improve the general taste up to a certain point, and to that point you inevitably depress the efforts of those who are born to instruct the rest. Had Spenser flourished in the nineteenth century, would he have aspired to produce the *Faery Queen*? Had Walter Scott lived in the sixteenth, would he have condescended to write the *Lady of the Lake*? Our great men are less great because our ordinary men are less abject. These lamentations over the results of this compromise are rather pathetic than just. It forms one indispensable chapter in the natural history of a people's intellectual progress. It is one of the stages through which the national mind must pass towards the general elevation of literature, sacred and profane. We know not how to regret, that genius has from the moment abdicated her austere supremacy, and stooped to be popular and plain. Mackintosh surrendered his philosophy to the compilation of a familiar history of England. Faithless to his *Peris* and *Glendoveers*, Mr. Moore is teaching the commonalty of the realm the sad tale of the woes inflicted on the land of his birth. No longer emulous of Porson, the Bishop of London devotes his learned leisure to preparing cheap and easy lessons for the householders of his diocese. Lord Brougham arrests the current of his eloquence, to instruct mechanics in the principles of the sciences which they are reducing to daily practice. Tracts for the times are extorted from the depositories of ecclesiastical tradition, obedient to the general impulse which they condemn, and constrained to render the Church argumentative, that they may render her oracular. Nay, the author of the "*Natural History of Enthusiasm*" himself, despite his own protests, yields at length to the current, and has become the periodical writer of monthly tracts,

where, in good round controversial terms, the superficial multitude are called to sit in judgment on the claims of the early fathers to sound doctrine, good morals, and common sense. Let who will repine at what has passed, and at what is passing, if they will allow us to rejoice in what is to come. If we witness the growth of no immortal reputations, we see the expansion of universal intelligence. The disparities of human understanding are much the same in all times; but it is when the general level is the highest that the mighty of the earth rise to the most commanding eminences.

But whatever may be the justice of the hopes we thus indulge for future generations, our business is with ourselves. If, as we think, they are well judging who devote the best gifts of nature and of learning to the instruction of the illiterate, the praise of wisdom is not to be denied to such as write with the more ambitious aim of stimulating the nobler intellects amongst us to enterprises commensurate with their elevated powers.

No strenuous effort for the good of mankind was ever yet made altogether in vain; nor will those of our author be fruitless, though the results may fall far short of his aspirations. The general currents of thought and action can never be diverted from their channels, except by minds as rarely produced as they are wonderfully endowed. Energy, decision, and a self-reliance, independent of human praise or censure, are amongst their invariable characteristics. To this sublime order of men the Recluse of Stamford Rivers does not belong. Nor can a place be assigned to him among those calmer spirits, whose inventive genius, or popular eloquence, has enabled them from their solitudes to cast on the agitated masses of society seeds of thought destined at some future period to change the aspect of human affairs. He is an independent more than an original thinker. He is rather exempt from fear than animated by ardent courage in announcing the fruits of his inquiries. A great master of language, he is himself but too often mastered by it. He is too much the creature, to become the reformer, of his age. His assiduity to please is fatal to his desire to command. His efforts to move the will are defeated by his success in dazzling the fancy. Yet his books exhibit a character, both moral and intellectual, from the study of which the reader can hardly fail to rise a wiser

and a better man. Standing aloof from all vulgar excitements, heedless of the transient politics and the fugitive literature of his times, and intent only on the permanent interests of mankind, he has laboured to promote them with an honest love of truth, aided by brilliant talents, comprehensive knowledge, and undaunted intrepidity. And thus he has come under the guidance of principles, which no man can cultivate in his own bosom, or earnestly impart to other minds, without earning a reward which will render human applause insignificant, or reduce the neglect of the world to a matter of comparative indifference.

## THE PORT-ROYALISTS.\*

(Edinburgh Review, 1841.)

ALL religions, and all ages, have their saints; their men of unearthly mould; self-conquerors; sublime even in their errors; not altogether hateful in their very crimes. If a man would understand the dormant powers of his own nature, let him read the *Acta Sanctorum*. Or, if "too high this price of knowledge," let him at least acquaint himself with the legends of the later heroes of the Gallican Church. Of all ascetics they were the least repulsive. They waged war on dulness with the ardour of Dangeau and St. Simon, and with still better success. While macerating their bodies in the cloisters of Port-Royal, they did not cease to be French men and French women of the Augustan age. While practising the monastic virtue of silence their social spirit escaped this unwelcome restraint, in a body of Memoirs as copious as those which record the splendour and the miseries of Versailles. In a series of volumes, of which the above is the first, the author is about to tell their story in the language (vernacular and erudite) of his country and his times. A rapid sketch of it may be of use in directing the attention of our readers to one of the most remarkable episodes in ecclesiastical history.

He whose journey lies from Versailles to Chevreuse, will soon find himself at the brow of a steep cleft or hollow, intersecting the monotonous plain across which he has been passing. The brook which winds through the verdant meadows beneath him, stagnates into a large pool, reflecting

\* Reuchlin, Geschichte von Port-Royal. Der Kampf des Reformirten und des Jesuitischen Katholicismus. 1 ter Band: bis zum Tode Angelica Arnauld. (Reuchlin, History of Port-Royal. The Struggle of the Reformed and the Jesuitical Catholicism. 1st vol.: to the death of Angelique Arnauld.) 8vo. Leipsic, 1839.

the solitary Gothic arch, the water-mill, and the dove-cot, which rise from its banks; with the farm-house, the decayed towers, the forest-trees, and the innumerable shrubs and creepers which clothe the slopes of the valley. France has many a lovelier prospect, though this is not without its beauty; and many a field of more heart-stirring interest, though this, too, has been ennobled by heroic daring; but through the length and breadth of that land of chivalry and of song, the traveller will in vain seek a spot so sacred to genius, to piety, and to virtue. That arch is all which remains of the once crowded monastery of Port-Royal. In those woods Racine first learned the language—the universal language—of poetry. Under the roof of that humble farm-house, Pascal, Arnauld, Nicole, De Sacy, and Tillet, meditated those works, which, as long as civilization and Christianity survive, will retain their hold on the gratitude and reverence of mankind. There were given innumerable proofs of the graceful good humour of Henry the Fourth. To this seclusion retired the heroine of the Fronde, Ann Genevieve, Duchess of Longueville, to seek the peace which the world could not give. Madame de Sevigné discovered here a place “*tout propre à inspirer le désir de faire son salut.*” From the Petit Trianon and Marly, there came hither to worship God, many a courtier and many a beauty, heart-broken or jaded with the very vanity of vanities—the idolatry of their fellow mortals. Survey French society in the seventeenth century from what aspect you will, it matters not, at Port-Royal will be found the most illustrious examples of whatever imparted to that motley assemblage any real dignity or permanent regard. Even to the mere antiquarian, it was not without a lively interest.

At the eve of his departure to the conquest of the holy Sepulchre, the good knight, Matthieu de Marli, cast a wistful gaze over the broad lands of his ancestors, and intrusted to his spouse, Mathilde de Garlande, the care of executing some work of piety by which to propitiate the Divine favour, and to ensure his safe return. A Benedictine monastery, for the reception of twelve ladies of the Cistercian order, was accordingly erected, in imitation of the cathedral at Amiens, and by the same architect. Four centuries witnessed the gradual increase of the wealth and dignity of the foundation. Prelates of the houses of Sully and Nemours enlarged its privileges. Pope Honorius III. authorized the



celebration of the sacred office within its walls, even though the whole country should be lying under a papal interdict; and of the host consecrated on the profession of a nun, seven fragments might be solemnly confided to her own keeping, that, for as many successive days, she might administer to herself the holy sacrament. Yet how arrest by spiritual immunities the earthward tendency of all sublunary things? At the close of the reign of Henry IV., the religious ladies of Port-Royal had learned to adjust their "robes à grandes manches" to the best advantage. Promenades by the margin of the lake relieved the tedium of monastic life. Gay strains of music than those of the choir, might be heard from the adjacent woods; and if a cavalier from Paris or Chevreuse had chanced to pursue his game that way, the fair musicians were not absolutely concealed nor inexorably silent. So lightly sat the burden of their vows on those amiable recluses, that the gayest courtier might well covet for his portionless daughter the rank of their lady abbess.

Such at least was the judgment of M. Marion. He was advocate-general to Henry IV., and maternal grandfather of Jaqueline Marie Angelique and of Agnes Arnauld. Of the arts to the invention of which the moderns may lay claim, that of jobbing is not one. M. Marion obtained from "the father of his people" the *coadjutorie* of the Abbey of Port-Royal for the high-spirited Jaqueline, then in her eighth year; and that of St. Cyr for the more gentle Agnes, over whom not more than five summers had passed. The young ladies renounced at once the nursery and the world. A single step conducted them from the leading strings to the veil. Before the completion of her first decade, Angelique, on the death of her immediate predecessor, found herself, in plenary right, the abbess and the ruler of her monastery; and, in attestation of her spiritual espousals, assumed the title and the name of the Mère Angelique, by which she has since been celebrated in the annals of the church.

To the church, however, must not be imputed this breach of ecclesiastical discipline. In the ardour of his parental affections, the learned advocate-general was hurried into acts for which he would have consigned a criminal of lower degree to the galleys. He obtained the requisite bulls from Rome by forged certificates of his grand-daughter's age; and to this treason against the holy see, Henry himself was at

least an accessory after the fact. Hunting in the valley of Port-Royal, the gay monarch trespassed on the precincts of the sacred enclosure. To repel the royal intruder, a child, bearing in her hand the crosier, which bespoke her high conventual rank, issued from the gates of the abbey at the head of a solemn procession of nuns, and rebuked her sovereign with all the majesty of an infant Ambrose. Henry laughed and obeyed. Marion's detected fraud would seem to have passed for a good practical joke, and for nothing more. In the result, however, no occurrence ever contributed less to the comedy of life, or formed the commencement of a series of events more grave or touching. It would be difficult or impossible to discover, in the history of the church, the name of any woman who has left so deep an impress of her character on the thoughts and the conduct of the Christian commonwealth.

The family of Arnauld held a conspicuous station among the noblesse of Provence, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In a later age, a member of that house enjoyed the singular honour of at once serving Catharine de Medicis as her procureur-general, and of defeating, sword in hand, at the head of his servants, the force sent to assassinate him on the day of St. Bartholomew. Returning to the bosom of the church, which had thus roughly wooed him, he transmitted his fortune and his office to his son, Antoine Arnauld, the husband of Catharine Marion. They were the happy parents of no less than twenty children. Of these the youngest was the great writer who has imparted to the name of Arnauld an imperishable lustre. Five of the daughters of the same house assumed the veil, in the abbey of Port-Royal. Their mother, Catharine Marion, was admitted in her widowhood into that society. Pomponne, the minister of Louis XIV.; Le Maitre, unrivalled among the masters of forensic eloquence in France; and De Saci, the author of the best version of the Holy Scriptures into the French language, were three of her grandsons. Before her death, the venerable matron had seen herself surrounded, in the monastery and the adjoining hermitages, by eighteen of her descendants in the first and second generations; nor until the final dispersion of the sisterhood, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, had the posterity of Antoine and Catharine Arnauld ceased to rule in the house of which the Mère Angelique had, seventy years before, been the renowned reformer.

To those who believe that the psychological distinction of the sexes may be traced to physical causes, and that, where they neither marry nor are given in marriage, those distinctions will for ever disappear, the character of Angelique is less perplexing than to the advocates of the opposite theory. Her understanding, her spirit, and her resolves, were all essentially masculine. She was endued with the various faculties by which man either extorts or wins dominion over his fellow-men;—with address, courage, fortitude, self-reliance, and an unfaltering gaze fixed on objects at once too vast to be measured and remote to be discerned but by the all-searching eye of faith. Among the Israelites of old, she would have assumed the office of Judge; or would have given out oracles in the forests of ancient Germany.

Born in the reign, and educated near the court of a Bourbon, the lighter and more gentle elements of her nature found exercise even under the paralyzing influences of an ascetic life; for Angelique was gay and light of heart, and St. Benedict himself might have forgiven or applauded the playful sallies of his votary. In scaling the heights of devotion, she could call to her own aid, and that of others, all the resources of the most plaintive or impassioned music. To flowers, and to the glad face of nature, she gave back their own smiles with a true woman's sympathy. With such literature as might be cultivated within the walls of her convent, she was intimately conversant; and would have eclipsed Madame de Sevigné's epistolary fame, had it been permitted to her to escape from theological into popular topics. Concentrated within a domestic circle, and bestowed on a husband or a child, the affections, which she poured out on every human being who claimed her pity, would have burned with a flame as pure and as intense as was ever hymned in poetry or dreamt of in romance. A traveller on the highways of the world, she must have incurred every peril except that of treading an obscure and inglorious path. Immured by superstition in a cloister, she opened the way at once to sublunary fame and to an immortal recompense; and has left an example as dangerous as it may be seductive to feeble minds, who, in a desperate imitation of such a model, should hazard a similar self-devotion.

Angelique, indeed, might be fitted for a nunnery; for such

was the strength, and such the sacred harmony of her spirit, that while still a sojourner on earth, she seemed already a denizen of heaven. When a child, she understood as a child; enjoying the sports, the rambles, and the social delights which the habits of Port-Royal had not then forbidden. With advancing years came deeper and more melancholy thoughts. She felt, indeed, (how could she but feel?) the yearnings of a young heart for a world where love and homage awaited her. But those mysteries of our being, of which the most frivolous are not altogether unconscious, pressed with unwonted weight on her. A spouse of Christ; a spiritual mother of those who sustained the same awful character—her orisons, her matins, and her vesper chants, accompanied by unearthly music and by forms of solemn significance; the Gothic pile beneath which she sat enthroned; and the altar where, as she was taught, the visible presence of her Redeemer was daily manifested—all spoke to her of a high destiny, a fearful responsibility, and of objects for which all sublunary ties might well be severed, and a sacrifice wisely made of every selfish feeling. Nor need a Protestant fear to acknowledge, that on a heart thus consecrated to the service of her Maker, rested the holy influence, familiar to all who meekly adore the great source of wisdom, and reverently acquiesce in his will. As a science, religion consists in the knowledge of the relations between God and man; as a principle, in the exercise of the corresponding affections; as a rule of duty, in the performance of the actions which those affections prescribe. The principle may thrive in healthful life and energy, though the science be ill understood and the rule imperfectly apprehended. For, after all, the great command is Love; and He from whom that command proceeded, is himself Love; and amidst all the absurdities (for such they were) of her monastic life, Angelique was still conscious of the presence of a Father, and found the guidance of a friend.

When at the age of eleven years, Angelique became the abbess of Port-Royal, few things were less thought of by the French ladies of the Cistercian order than the rule of their austere founder. During the wars of the League, religion, by becoming a watchword, had almost ceased to be a reality; civil war, the apology for every crime, had debased the national character; and the profligacy of man-



ners which the last generation expiated by their sufferings, may be distinctly paid back to the age of which Davila has written the political, and Bassompierre the social history. Society will still exert a powerful influence even over those by whom it has been abandoned. When Gabrielle d'Etrees reigned at the Louvre, beads were told and masses sung in neighbouring cloisters, by vestals who, in heathen Rome, would have been consigned to a living sepulchre. In a monastery, the spiritual thermometer ranges from the boiling to the freezing point with but few intermediate pauses. From the ecstasies of devotion there is but one step to disgust, and thence to sensuality, for most of those who dare to forego the aids to piety and virtue which divine wisdom has provided in the duties and the affections of domestic life.

While this downward progress was advancing at Port-Royal, it happened that a Capuchin friar sought and obtained permission to preach there. Of the man himself, the chroniclers of the house have left a scandalous report; but they gratefully acknowledge the efficacy of his sermon. Angelique listened, and was converted. Such, at least, is her own statement; and unstirred be all the theological questions connected with it. How deep was the impression on her mind, may be gathered from her own words:—"Often," she exclaims, "did I wish to fly a hundred leagues from the spot, and never more to see my father, mother, or kindred, dearly as I love them. My desire was to live apart from every one but God, unknown to any human being, concealed and humble, with no witness but himself, with no desire but to please him." Her dignity as abbess she now regarded as a burden. Even her projected reforms had lost their interest. To live where her holy aspirations would be thwarted, and where examples of holiness would *not* be found, was to soar to a more arduous, and therefore a more attractive sphere of self-denial.

That such fascinations should dazzle a young lady in her seventeenth year, is, it must be confessed, no very memorable prodigy; but to cherish no ineffectual emotions was one of the characteristics of the Mère Angelique, as it is, indeed, of all powerful minds. To abdicate her ecclesiastical rank, and by breathing a tainted moral atmosphere, to nourish by the force of contrast the loftier Christian



graces, were purposes ultimately executed, though for awhile postponed. She paused only till the sisterhood of Port Royal should have acquired, from her example or teaching, that sanctity of manners in which her creed informed her that the perfection of our nature consists. To the elder ladies, the prospect had few charms. But the will of their young abbess prevailed. They laid at her feet their separate possessions, abandoned every secular amusement, and, closing the gates of their monastery against all strangers, retired to that uninterrupted discharge of their spiritual exercises to which their vows had consigned them. Much may be read, in the conventual annals, of the contest with her family to which the Mère Angelique was exposed by the last of these resolutions. On a day, subsequently held in high esteem as the "*Journée du Guichet*," her parents and M. D'Andilly, her eldest brother, were publicly excluded, by her mandate, from the hallowed precincts, despite their reproaches and their prayers, and the filial agonies of her own heart. That great sacrifice accomplished, the rest was easy. Poverty resumed his stern dominion. Linen gave place to the coarsest woollens. Fasting and vigils subdued the lower appetites; and Port Royal was once more a temple whence the sacrifices of devotion rose with an unextinguished flame to heaven, thence, as it was piously believed, to draw down an unbroken stream of blessings to earth.

Far different were the strains that arose from the neighbouring abbey of Maubisson, under the rule of Mde. d'Etrees. That splendid mansion, with its dependent baronies and forests, resembled far more the palace and gardens of Armida, than a retreat sacred to penitence and prayer. She was the sister of the too famous Gabrielle, to whose influence with Henry she was indebted for this rich preferment. Indulging without restraint, not merely in the luxuries but in the debaucheries of the neighbouring capital, she had provoked the anger of the king, and the alarm of the general of the order. A visitation of the house was directed. Madame d'Etrees, imprisoned the visitors, and well-nigh starved them. A second body of delegates presented themselves. Penances, at least when involuntary, were not disused at Maubisson. The new commissioners were locked up in a dungeon, regaled with bread and water, and soundly whipped every morning. Supported by a

guard, the general himself then hazarded an encounter with the formidable termagant. He returned with a whole skin, but boasted no other advantage. Next appeared at the abbey gates a band of archers. After two days of fruitless expostulation, they broke into the enclosure. Madame now changed her tactics. She took up a defensive position, till then unheard of in the science of strategy. In plain terms, she went to bed. A more embarrassing manœuvre was never executed by Turenne or Condé. The siege was turned into a blockade. Hour after hour elapsed; night succeeded to day, and day to night; but still the abbess was recumbent—unapparelled, unapproachable. Driven thus to choose between a ludicrous defeat and a sore scandal, what Frenchman could longer hesitate? Bed, blankets, abbess and all, were raised on the profane shoulders of the archers, lifted into a carriage, and most appropriately turned over to the keeping of the *Filles Penitentes* at Paris.

And now was to be gratified the lofty wish of Angelique to tread in paths where, unsustained by any human sympathy, she might cast herself with an undivided reliance on the Arm which she knew could never fail her. From the solemn repose of Port-Royal, she was called, by the general of the order, to assume the government of the ladies of Maubisson. Thetis passing from the ocean caves to the Grecian camp, did not make a more abrupt transition. At Maubisson, the compromise between religious duties and earthly pleasures was placed on the most singular footing. Monks and nuns sauntered together through the gardens of the monastery, or angled in the lakes which watered them. Fêtes were celebrated in the arbours with every pledge except that of temperance. Benedictine cowls and draperies were blended in the dance with the military uniform and the stiff brocades of their secular guests; and the evening closed with cards and dice and amateur theatricals, until the curtain fell on scenes than which none could more require that friendly shelter. Toil and care might seem to have fled the place, or rather to have been reserved exclusively for the confessor. Even for him relief was provided. Considerately weighing the extent of the labours they habitually imposed on him, his fair penitents drew up for their common use certain written forms of self-arraignment, to which he, with equal tenderness, responded by other established forms of conditional absolution.

But the lady entered, and Comus and his crew fled the hallowed ground which they had thus been permitted to defile. She entered with all the majesty of faith, tempered by a meek compassion for the guilt she abhorred, and strong in that virgin purity of heart which can endure unharmed the contact even of pollution. "Our health and our lives may be sacrificed," she said to her associates in this work of mercy; "but the work is the work of God:" and in the strength of God she performed it. Seclusion from the world was again established within the refectory and the domain of Maubisson. Novices possessing a "genuine vocation" were admitted. Angelique directed at once the secular and the spiritual affairs of the convent. All the details of a feudal principality, the education of the young, the care of the sick, the soothing of the penitents, the management of the perverse, the conduct of the sacred offices, alternately engaged her time; and in each she exhibited a gentleness, a gaiety, and a firmness of mind, before which all resistance gave way. The associates of Madame d'Etrees retained their love of good cheer, and Angelique caused their table to be elegantly served. They sang deplorably out of tune, and the young abbess silently endured the discord which racked her ear. To their murmurs she answered in her kindest accents. Their indolence she rebuked only by performing the most menial offices in their service; and inculcated self-denial by assigning to herself a dormitory, which, to say the truth, would have much better suited the house-dog. The record of the strange and even sordid self-humiliations to which she thought it right to bow, can hardly be read without a smile; but, whatever may have been the errors of her creed, a more touching picture has never been drawn of the triumphs of love and of wisdom, than in the record left by Madame Suireau des Anges of this passage of the life of Angelique Arnauld.

But Madame d'Etrees was not yet at the end of her resources. A company of young men, under the guidance of her brother-in-law Count de Sauzé were observed one evening to loiter near the house of the *Filles Penitentes*. By the next morning she was under their escort at the gates of Maubisson. Burst open by main force, they again admitted the ejected abbess. The servant who opposed her entrance was chastised on the spot. Patients who now occupied as an hospital the once sumptuous chambers of

the Abbatial lodge, instantly found themselves in much more humble lodgings. Cooks resumed their long neglected art, and Madame d'Etree's provided a dinner worthy of her former hospitality and her recent privations. But in the presence of Angelique, the virago was abashed. To intimidate or to provoke her rival proved alike impossible: it might be more easy to overpower her. De Sauzé and his confederates made the attempt. They discharged their pistols and flourished their drawn swords over her head, with unmanly menaces. She remained unmoved and silent. The screams which the occasion demanded, were accordingly supplied by the intrusive abbess. Clamour and outrage were alike ineffectual. At length Madame d'Etree's and her respectable confessor, aided by De Sauzé, laid their hands on Angelique, and thrust her from the precincts of the monastery. Thirty of the nuns followed her in solemn procession. Their veils let down, their eyes cast on the earth, and their hands clasped in prayer, they slowly moved to a place of refuge in the neighbouring town of Pontoise!

But alas, for the vanity of human triumphs!—waving banners, and burnished arms glitter through the advancing column of dust on the road from Paris to Maubisson. Scouts announce the approach of two hundred and fifty well-appointed archers; Madame d'Etree's and her cavaliers escape by the postern. A desperate leap saves the worthless life of her confessor. Her partisan, the Mère de la Sure, “a nun by profession, but otherwise resembling a trooper,” mounts through a trap-door to a hiding-place in the ceiling, thence to be shamefully dragged by an archer whom she still more shamefully abused. Then might be seen through the gloom of night, a train of priests and nuns drawing near with measured steps to the venerable abbey; on either side a double file of cavalry, and in each horseman's hand a torch, illuminating the path of the returning exiles. Angelique resumed her benignant reign; but not in peace. Brigands led by De Sauzé, and encouraged by her rival, haunted the neighbouring forests; and though protected by the archers, the monastery remained in a state of siege. Shots were fired through the windows, and the life of Angelique was endangered. Strong in the assurance of Divine protection, she demanded and obtained the removal of the guard. Her confidence was justified by the



event. Madame d'Etrees was discovered, was restored to her old quarters at the *Filles Penitentes*, and in due time transferred—not without good cause—to the Chatelet; there to close in squalid misery, in quarrels, and intemperance, a career which might, with almost equal propriety, form the subject of a drama, a homily, or a satire.

For five successive years Angelique laboured to bring back the ladies of Maubisson to the exact observance of their sacred vows. Aided by her sister Agnes, the abbess of St. Cyr, she established a similar reform in a large proportion of the other Cistercian nunneries of France. All obstacles yielded to their love, their prudence, and their self-devotion. A moral plague was stayed, and excesses which even the sensual and the worldly condemned, were banished from the sanctuaries of religion. That in some, the change was but from shameless riot to hypocritical conformity; that in others, intemperance merely gave way to mental lethargy; and that even the most exalted virtues of the cloister held but a subordinate and an equivocal place in the scale of Christian graces, is indeed but too true: yet assuredly, it was in no such critical spirit as this, that the labours of Angelique were judged and accepted by Him, in the lowly imitation of whom she had thus gone about doing good. “She has done what she could,” was the apology with which he rescued from a like cold censure the love which had expressed itself in a costly and painful sacrifice; nor was the gracious benediction which rewarded the woman of Bethany withheld from the abbess of Port Royal. To that tranquil home she bent her steps, there to encounter far heavier trials than any to which the resentment of Madame d'Etrees had exposed her.

Accompanied by a large number of the nuns of Maubisson, Angelique returned to the valley of Chevreuse. They brought with them neither silver nor gold, though rich in treasures of a far higher price in the account of their devout protectress. Poverty, disease, and death, were however in their train. Rising from the marshes below, a humid fog hung continually on the slopes of the adjacent hills, and the now crowded monastery was soon converted into one great hospital. But for a timely transfer of the whole establishment to a hotel purchased for them by the mother of Angelique in the Faubourg St. Jaques at Paris, their remaining history might all have been compressed into a chapter on the influence of *malaria*.



The restoration of the community to health was not, however, the most momentous consequence of the change. It introduced the abbe to the society and the influence of Hauranne de Verger, the abbot of St. Cyran, one of the most memorable names in the ecclesiastical annals of that age. When Richelieu was yet a simple bishop, he distinguished among the crowd of his companions one whose graceful bearing, open countenance, learning, gaiety, and wit, revealed to his penetrating glance the germs of future eminence. But to an eye dazzled by such prospects as were already dawning on the ambitious statesman, those which had arrested the upward gaze of his young associate were altogether inscrutable. With what possible motive De Verger should for whole days bury himself in solitude, and chain down that buoyant spirit to the study of the Greek and Latin fathers was one of the few problems which ever engaged and baffled the sagacity of M. de Lucon. They parted; the prelate to his craft, the student to his books; the one to extort the reluctant admiration of the world, the other to toil and to suffer in the cause of piety and truth. They met again; the cardinal to persecute, and the abbot to be his victim. Death called them both to their account; leaving to them in the world they had agitated or improved, nothing but historical names, as forcibly contrasted as they had been strangely associated.

Great men (and to few could that title be more justly given than to Richelieu) differ from other men chiefly in the power of self-multiplication; in knowing how to make other men adopt their views and execute their purposes. Thus to subjugate the genius of St. Cyran, the great minister had spared neither caresses nor bribes. The place of first almoner to Henrietta of England, the bishoprics of Clermont and Bayonne, a choice among numerous abbacies, were successively offered and refused. "Gentlemen, I introduce to you the most learned man in Europe," was the courteous phrase by which the Cardinal made known the friend of his youth to the courtiers who thronged his levée. But human applause had lost its charm for the ear of St. Cyran. The retired and studious habits of his early days had not appeared more inexplicable to the worldly-minded statesman than his present indifference. Self-knowledge had made Richelieu uncharitable. Incredulous of virtues of which he detected no type in the dark recesses

of his own bosom, he saw, in his former companion, a treacherous enemy, if not a rival. There were secrets of his early life of which he seems to have expected and feared the disclosure. St. Cyran was at least the silent, and might become the open enemy of the declaration by which the parliament and clergy of Paris had annulled the marriage of Gaston Duke of Orleans, to pave the way for his union with the niece of the cardinal. To his long-cherished scheme of erecting the kingdom of France into a Patriarchate in his own favour, there could arise no more probable or more dangerous opponent. To these imaginary or anticipated wrongs, was added another, which seems to have excited still more implacable resentment. An aspirant after every form of glory, Richelieu had convinced himself, and required others to believe, that his literary and theological were on a level with his political powers. He was the author of a Catechism where might be read the dogma, that contrition alone, uncombined in the heart of the penitent with any emotions of love towards the Deity, was sufficient to justify an absolution at the Confessional. One Seguenot, a priest of the Oratory, maintained and published the opposite opinion. Rumour denied to Seguenot the real parentage of the book which bore his name, and ascribed it to St. Cyran. From speculations on the love of God to feelings of hatred to man, what polemic will not readily pass, whether his cap be red or black? Seguenot's errors were denounced by the Sorbonne, and the poor man himself was sent to the Bastille, there, during the rest of his great opponent's life, to obtain clearer views on the subject of contrition. Impartial justice required that the real, or imputed, should fare no better than the nominal author; and St. Cyran was conducted to Vincennes, to breathe no more the free air of heaven till Richelieu himself should be laid in the grave.

Never had that gloomy fortress received within its walls a man better fitted to endure with composure the utmost reverses of fortune. To him, as their patriarch or founder, the whole body of the Port Royalists, with one voice, attribute not merely a pre-eminence above all other teachers, but such a combination of intellectual powers and Christian graces, as would entitle him not so much to a place in the calendar, as to a place apart from, and above, the other luminaries in that spiritual galaxy. Make every deduction

from their eulogies which a rational skepticism may suggest, and it will yet be impossible to evade the accumulated proofs on which they claim for St. Cyran the reverence of mankind. Towards the close of the first of the four volumes which he has dedicated to the attempt, Claude Lancelot confesses and laments the difficulty of conveying to others by words any definite image of the sublime and simple reality which he daily contemplated with more than filial reverence. He describes a man moving through the whole circle of the virtues which the Gospel inculcates, with a step so firm as to indicate the constant aid of a more than human power, and with a demeanour so lowly as to bespeak an habitual consciousness of that divine presence. He depicts a moral hero, by whom every appetite had been subdued, and every passion tranquillized, though still exquisitely alive to the pains and the enjoyments of life, and responding with almost feminine tenderness to every affectionate and kindly feeling—a master of all erudition, but never so happy as when imparting to little children the elementary truths on which his own heart reposed—grave, nay, solemn in discourse, but with tones so gentle, a wisdom so profound, and words of such strange authority to animate and to soothe the listener, that, in comparison with his, all other colloquial eloquence was wearisome and vapid—rebuking vice far less by stern reproof than by the contrast of his own serene aspect, at once the result and the reflection of the perfect peace in which his mind continually dwelt,—exhibiting a transcript, however rudely and imperfectly, yet faithfully drawn, of the great example to which his eye was ever turned, and where, averting his regard from all inferior models, it was his wont to study, to imitate, and to adore. In short, the St. Cyran of Lancelot's portraiture is one of those rare mortals whose mental health is absolute and unimpaired—whose character consists not so much in the excellence of particular qualities, as in the symmetry, the balance, and the well-adjusted harmonies of all—who concentrate their energies in one mighty object, because they live under the habitual influence of one supreme motive—who are ceaselessly animated by a love embracing every rational being, from Him who is the common parent of the rest, to the meanest and the vilest of those who were originally created in his image and likeness.

Nor was Lancelot a man inapt to discriminate. He was the author of the Port-Royal Grammars, Greek, Latin, and the Italian, now fallen into disuse, but so well known to such of us as ploughed those rugged soils during the first ten years of the present century. His biographical labours are not without a tinge of his style as a grammarian;—a little tedious perhaps, and not a little prolix and over-methodical, but replete in almost every page with such touches of genuine dignity in the master, and cordial reverence in the disciple—with a sympathy so earnest for the virtues he celebrates, and so simple-hearted a consciousness of his own inferiority—that, in the picture he undesignedly draws of himself, he succeeds more than in any other way in raising a lofty conception of the man by whom he was held in such willing and grateful subjugation. And he had many fellow-subjects. Richelieu himself had felt his daring spirit awed by the union, in the friend of his youth, of a majestic repose and unwearied activity, which compelled the great minister to admit that the heart of man might envelop mysteries beyond his divination. Pascal, Nicole, Arnauld, and many others, eminent in that age for genius and piety, submitted themselves to his guidance in their studies as well as in their lives, with the implicit deference of children awaiting the commands of a revered and affectionate father. He was the most voluminous writer; but of his published works one only attained a transient celebrity, and of that book his authorship was more than doubtful. If he did not disown, he never claimed it. Of the innumerable incidents recorded of him during his imprisonment at Vincennes, few are more characteristic than the sale of a considerable part of a scanty collection of books he had brought there, to purchase clothes for two of his fellow-prisoners, the Baron and Baroness de Beau Soleil. “I entreat you,” he says to the lady to whom he gave this commission, “that the cloth may be fine and good, and befitting their station in society. I do not know what is becoming; but, if I remember, some one has told me that gentlemen and ladies of their condition ought not to be seen in company without gold lace for the men and black lace for the women. If I am right about this, pray purchase the best, and let every thing be done modestly, yet handsomely, that when they see each other, they may, for a few minutes at least, forget that they are captives.” It is in the moral,



rather than in the intellectual qualities of St. Cyran, that his claim to the veneration of posterity must now be rested. He occupies a place in ecclesiastical history as the founder of Jansenism in France.

Of that system of religious belief and practice, the origin is to be traced to the joint labours of St. Cyran and Cornelius Jansen, during the six years which they passed in social study at Bayonne. Returning to his native country, Jansen became first a Professor of divinity at Louvain, and afterwards Bishop of Ypres. There he surrendered himself to a life of unremitting labour. Ten times he read over every word of the works of Augustine; thirty times he studied all those passages of them which relate to the Pelagian controversy. All the fathers of the church were elaborately collated for passages illustrative of the opinions of the Bishop of Hippo. At length, after an uninterrupted study of twenty years, was finished the celebrated *Augustinus Cornelii Jansenii*. With St. Austin as his text and guide, the good Bishop proceeded to establish, on the authority of that illustrious father, those doctrines which, in our times and country, have been usually distinguished by the terms Calvinistic or Evangelical. Heirs of guilt and corruption, he considered the human race, and each successive member of it, as lying in a state of condemnation, and as advancing towards a state of punishment; until an internal impulse from on high awakens one and another to a sense of this awful truth, and infuses into them a will to fly from impending vengeance. But this impulse is imparted only to the few; and on them it is bestowed in pursuance of a decree existing in the divine intelligence before the creation of our species. Of the motives of their preference not even a conjecture can be formed. So far as human knowledge extends, it is referable simply to the divine volition; and is not dependent on any inherent moral difference between the objects of it, and those from whom such mercy is withheld. This impulse is not, however, irresistible. Within the limits of his powers, original or imparted, man is a free agent;—free to admit and free to reject the proffered aid. If rejected, it enhances his responsibility—if admitted, it leads him by continual accessions of the same supernatural assistance to an acquiescence in those opinions, to the exercise of those affections, and to the practice of those virtues, which collectively form



the substance of the Christian system. Such is the general result of the labours of Jansen. On the day which witnessed the completion of them, he was removed by the plague to a state of being where he probably learned at once to rejoice in the fidelity, and to smile at the simplicity of those sublunary toils. Within an hour of his death he made a will, submitting his work to the judgment of the Church of Rome, in the communion of which he had lived and was about to die. He addressed to Pöpe Urban the Eighth a letter, laying the fruits of his studies at the feet of his holiness, "approving, condemning, advancing, or retracting, as should be prescribed by the thunder of the apostolic see." Both the will and the letter were suppressed by his executors. Two years from the death of its author had not elapsed, before the *Augustinus* appeared in print. It was the signal of a contest which for nearly seventy years agitated the Sorbonne and Versailles, fired the enthusiasm of the ladies and the divines of France, and gave to her historians and her wits a theme, used with fatal success, to swell the tide of hatred and of ridicule—which has finally swept away the temporal greatness, and for awhile silenced the spiritual ministrations, of the Gallican Church.

Having aided largely in the composition of this memorable treatise, St. Cyran exerted himself with still greater effect in building up a society for the maintenance and promulgation of the principles it established. Angelique Arnauld and the sisterhood of Port-Royal were now settled at Paris, but they were still the proprietors of the deserted monastery; and there were gradually assembled a college of learned men, bound by no monastic vows, and living according to no positive rule, Benedictine or Franciscan. They were chiefly disciples of St. Cyran, and under his guidance had retired from the world to consecrate their lives to penitence, to their own spiritual improvement, and to the instruction of mankind.

Of this number was Antoine Le Maitre. At the age of twenty-seven, he had been advanced to the rank of Counsellor of State, and enjoyed at the bar an unrivalled reputation for learning and for eloquence. When he was to speak, even the churches were abandoned. Quitting their pulpits the preachers assisted to throng the hall of the palace of justice; and some of the most celebrated among

them actually obtained from their superiors a permanent dispensation from their ecclesiastical duties at such seasons, that they might improve in the arts of public speaking by listening to the great advocate. When he spoke, the delight of the audience broke out into bursts of applause, which the Judges were unable or unwilling to repress. "I would rather be the object of those plaudits than enjoy all the glory of my Lord the Cardinal," was the somewhat hazardous exclamation of one of his friends, as he joined, heart and hand, in the universal tumult.

Far different was the estimate which his devout mother had formed of the prospects of her son. She was one of the sisters of Angelique Arnauld, and amidst the cares of conjugal life cherished a piety at least as pure and as ardent as ever burned in the bosom of a Carthusian. In the wealth and glory which rewarded his forensic eminence she could see only allurements, to which (so she judged) his peace on earth, and his meetness for a holier state of being beyond the grave must be sacrificed. She mourned over his fame, and prayed that her child might be abased, so in due season he might be exalted. It happened that his aunt Madame D'Andilly, in the last awful scene of life, was attended by her kindred, and amongst the rest by Le Maitre. Her fading eye was fixed on the crucifix borne in the hand of St. Cyran, as she listened to his voice, now subdued to its gentlest accents, and breathing hope, and peace, and consolation. It was as though some good angel had overpassed the confines of the earthly and heavenly worlds, to give utterance, in human language, to emotions sacred as his own high abode, and to thoughts as lofty as his own celestial nature. The great orator listened, and wondered, and wept. An eloquence such as even his fervent imagination had never before conceived, enthralled and subdued his inmost soul. It was but a soft whisper in the chamber of death; but in those gentle tones, and to that weeping company, were spoken words, compared with which his own eloquence appeared to him trivial, harsh, and dissonant as the howlings of the forest. And when his dying relative's last sigh was heard, accompanied by the solemn benediction, "Depart, O Christian soul! from this world, in the name of the Almighty God who created you," Le Maitre felt that the bonds which attached him to that world were for ever broken. He yielded himself to the spiritual

guidance of St. Cyran; resigned his office and his calling; and plunged into a retreat, where in solitude, silence, and continued penances, he passed the remaining twenty-one years of his life. By the advice of his confessor, the execution of this design was postponed till the close of the annual session of the courts. In the interval he resumed his ordinary employments, but the spirit which till then had animated his efforts was gone. He became languid and unimpressive; and one of the judges was heard to mutter, that, after all, the real power of Le Maitre was that of persuading to sleep. This was too much even for a penitent. Fixing his eye on the critic, he once more summoned his dormant strength, and pouring forth all the energies of his soul in one last and most triumphant speech, he for ever quitted the scene of his forensic glories. At Port-Royal he appropriately charged himself with the care of the proprietary interests of the house. A village judge in the neighbourhood was once attended by the illustrious advocate on a question of the purchase of some bullocks. Astounded by his eloquence, (so runs the story,) the judge fell on his knees before the pleader, professing his unworthiness to preside in his presence, and imploring that they might exchange places. A more likely tale records that the booksellers had got up, during Le Maitre's retreat, an edition of his speeches full of interpolations and errors. At "the request of friends," though not with the consent of his confessors, the orator undertook a corrected edition. His spiritual guides interfered. They prescribed, as a new species of penance, that he should silently acquiesce in this inroad on his fame as a speaker. The penitent submitted, but not so the booksellers. They (worldly men!) talked loudly of violated promises, and of sheets rendered useless. He listened to discourses on the duty of mortifying these last movements of vain glory. Under the excitement of the dispute, his health, already enfeebled by his mode of life, gave way. A fever decided the question against the publishers; and Le Maitre was doomed at length to die the victim of the brilliant career he had so long and resolutely abandoned.

His brother Mons. de Sericourt was another of the converts of St. Cyran. De Sericourt had served with distinction under Condé. He was taken prisoner at the siege of Philipsberg, and effected his escape by leaping from the

walls of the fortress at the imminent hazard of his life. Under the deep impression, which this incident left on his mind, of the protecting care of Providence, he returned to Paris, where his first object was to visit his brother, the report of whose retreat from the bar had filled him with astonishment. He found him (the words are Fontaine's) in a kind of a tomb, where he was buried alive; his manner bespeaking all the gloom of penitence. De Sericourt was shocked, and in vain endeavoured to recognise Le Maitre in the person who stood before him. Immediately changing his demeanour, Le Maitre embraced his brother with looks full of gaiety and spirit, exclaiming, "Behold the Le Maitre of former days! He is dead to the world, and now desires only to die to himself. I have spoken enough to men. Henceforth I wish to converse only with God. I have exerted myself in vain to plead the cause of others. Now I am to plead my own. Do you intend to pay me the same compliment which I receive from the world at large, who believe and publish that I have gone mad?" Nothing could be more remote from the judgment of the soldier. Instead of regarding his brother as mad, he aspired to share his solitude, and succeeded. Under the direction of St. Cyran, he joined in the silence and austerities of the advocate. During the war of the princes he once more took up arms for the defence of Port-Royal; but his monastic life was soon brought to a close. Philipsberg had in reality been attended with less danger. At the age of thirty-nine he died, a premature victim to fastings, vigils, confinement, and probably to ennui. Recruits for Port-Royal were but seldom drawn from the armies of the Most Christian King, and could hardly have been draughted from a less promising quarter.

In this memorable brotherhood there was yet a third, Louis Isaac Le Maitre de Saci. At the early age of fourteen he was placed by his aunt, the Mère Angelique, under the guidance of St. Cyran. From that prophetic eye the future eminence of his pupil was not hidden. "God will restore him to you, for his death would probably be the greatest loss which the church could sustain"—was the prediction with which St. Cyran at once disclosed his own hopes and allayed the fears of De Saci's mother, as he watched over the sick-bed of her child. To ensure the fulfilment of those hopes, the mind of the boy was sedulously trained. Ab-



solute, unhesitating submission to human authority, as representing the Divine, was the cardinal principle of his education. Though himself one of the most conspicuous teachers of his age as a guide to others, he, on no single question, presumed to guide himself. If no other director could have been had, he would have placed himself under the direction of his valet, was the praise with which his friends expressed their admiration of his illustrious docility. By the advice or commands of St. Cyran, he accordingly, like his brothers, became one of the recluses of Port-Royal; and, like them, transferred to the support of the monastery all his worldly wealth. With them also he surrendered himself up to penitence, to solitude, and to silence; and in their company supplied his emaciated frame with food which rather mocked than satisfied its wants. Le Maitre thus describes one of the *petits soupers* of Port-Royal:—“It is, you know, but a slight repast which they serve up for us in the evening; but it engages my brother De Saci as completely as the most sumptuous meal. For my own part, such is the warmth of my temperament, the end of my good cheer follows so hard on its beginning, that I can hardly tell which is which. When all is over with me, and I have nothing left to do but to wash my hands, I see my brother De Saci, as composed and as serious as ever, take up his quarter of an apple, peel it deliberately, cut it up with precision, and swallow it at leisure. Before he begins, I have more than half done. When his little all is over, he rises from table as light as when he sat down, leaving untouched the greater part of what was set before him, and walks off as seriously as a man who had been doing great things, and who never fasted except on fast-days.” Poor Le Maitre! the gay spirit which had animated the palace of justice had its transient flashes even in his “living tomb;” though the smile was in this case lighted up at an absurdity which had well-nigh conducted his brother to that tomb where all life is extinct. Under these solemn parodies on what usually goes on at the dinner table, De Saci pined away; and was rescued, not without extreme hazard, from the effects of his suicidal abstemiousness. He returned from the gates of death with a spirit unsubdued and undaunted; for it was animated by hopes, and sustained by convictions which gave to that last enemy the aspect and the welcome of a friend. Admitted, in re-



luctant obedience to his confessor, to ordination as a priest, he assumed the office of director to the recluses of either sex at Port-Royal. Nature struggled in the bosom of Le Maitre against laying bare all the secrets of his soul to the inspection of his younger brother. But authority prevailed. Their mother led the way, by placing herself under the direction of her son. Blaize Pascal himself meekly took the law of his conscience from the same revered lips. Days of persecution followed; and De Saci was driven from his retreat, and confined for more than two years in the Bastille. There was fulfilled the prediction of St. Cyran. Fontaine, the bosom friend of De Saci, was the associate of his prison hours. They were hours of suffering and of pain. But they had been ill exchanged for the brightest and the most joyous passed by the revellers in the gay city beneath them. In those hours, De Saci executed, and his friend transcribed, that translation of the Holy Scriptures which to this moment is regarded in France as the most perfect version in their own or in any other modern tongue. While yet under the charge of St. Cyran, the study of the divine oracles was the ceaseless task of De Saci. In mature life, it had been his continual delight; in the absence of every other solace, it possessed his mind with all the energy of a master passion. Of the ten thousand chords which there blend together in sacred harmony, there was not one which did not awaken a responsive note in the heart of the aged prisoner. In a critical knowledge of the sacred text he may have had many superiors, but none in that exquisite sensibility to the grandeur, the pathos, the superhuman wisdom, and the awful purity of the divine original, without which none can truly apprehend, or accurately render into another idiom, the sense of the inspired writers. Even the habitual prostration of his judgment to a human authority, believed to be divine, aided him as a translator. It forbade, indeed, the correction of errors, but it imparted freedom and confidence to the expression of all that he acknowledged as truth. Protestants may with justice except to many a passage of De Saci's translation; but they will, we fear, search their own libraries in vain for any, where the author's unhesitating assurance of the real sense of controverted words permits his style to flow with a similar absence of constraint, and an equal warmth and glow of diction.

Fontaine, the humble companion of his biblical labours, had also been one of the penitents of De Saci. He was a man of learning, and his "Mémoires sur M.M. de Port-Royal," bespeak a nature gentle, affectionate, and devout. But to saturate his memory with the discourse of minds more exalted than his own, and to minister to them in collating or transcribing the books on which they were employed, limited his humble desires. He was successively the amanuensis of De Saci, and the secretary of the "great Arnauld." With the exception of Pascal, a name so great does not appear among the disciples of St. Cyran, or the inmates of Port-Royal.

Antoine Arnauld was the youngest child of the parents of the Mère Angelique: he was consequently the uncle of Le Maitre, De Sericourt, and De Saci. From his earliest years the reputation of his genius and learning had rendered him the object of universal notice and expectation. Richelieu himself is recorded to have stolen silently into his chamber, to enjoy the unpremeditated conversation of the young student. The Cardinal had no apparent reason to dread that in this case his advances would be repulsed; for Arnauld possessed several rich benefices, dressed in the fashion, and even kept a carriage. But repulsed they were, and by the influence of the man to whom similar allurements had been presented in vain. In his dungeon at Vincennes, St. Cyran received a visit from the young abbé. That almost magical influence was again exerted with irresistible power. Arnauld renounced his preferments, assumed the garb of penitence, and became the companion of his nephews, Le Maitre and Sericourt, in their austere retirement. This abandonment of the world was not, however, so absolute, but that he still sought the rank of a *socius*, or fellow of the Sorbonne. By the authority of Richelieu, his claims were rejected. But not even the Cardinal could obstruct the advancement of so eminent a scholar and divine to the dignity of a doctor in divinity. "To defend the truth, if necessary, to the death," was in those days one of the vows of such a graduate—vows, it is to be feared, light as air with most men, but, in this instance, engraven as with a pen of iron on the soul of the new professor of theology. A year had scarcely elapsed since he had received from the lips of his dying mother an adjuration to be faithful in the defence of truth at the ex-

pense, were it possible, of a thousand lives. Touched with the coincidence of his academical oath and of this maternal precept, he thenceforward existed but to combat for what he at least esteemed the truth; and endured poverty, exile, and reproach, as he would have cheerfully submitted to death, in that sacred warfare. In controversy he found his vocation, his triumph, and perhaps his delight. The author of more than a hundred volumes, he was engaged in almost as many contests. His great work, *La fréquente Communion*, is essentially controversial. He warred with the Jesuits as a body; and with several of their most eminent writers, as Sirmond, Nouet, and De Bonis, he carried on separate debates. Apologies for St. Cyran, Jansenius, and for the ladies of Port-Royal, flowed copiously from his ever ready pen. He assailed the metaphysical meditations of Des Cartes, and Malebranche's theory of miracles. Even with his friend and associate, Nicole, he contended, on an attempt to apply certain geometrical principles to the solution of some problems in divinity. Claude, Maimbourg, and Annat, were among his adversaries. The mere list of his works occupies twenty-six closely printed octavo pages. A rapid analysis of them fills a large volume. If that compilation may be trusted, (he would be a bold man who should undertake to verify it,) the vast collection of books which bear the name of Antoine Arnauld scarcely contain a tract, except those on mathematics, in which he is not engaged in theological or scientific strife with some antagonist. In the catalogue, of course, appears the celebrated treatise *De la Perpetuité de la Foi sur l'Eucharistie*, a work rewarded with higher applause than any other of his avowed writings. Twenty-seven Bishops and twenty Doctors prefaced it with eulogies on the learning, piety, talents, and orthodoxy of the illustrious author. He dedicated it to Clement IX., and was repaid with the most glowing compliments. Perhaps a still more gratifying tribute to his success was the conversion to the Roman Catholic faith of Turenne, of which this book was the occasion; and yet nothing is more certain than that the real author was not Arnauld, but Nicole. In the title-page of a book, designed to refute the formidable Claude, the two friends judged the name of a doctor of the church would avail more than that of a simple *tonsuré*—a literary and pious fraud, which it is impossible to excuse; and, on the

side of Nicole, an example of zeal for a man's cause triumphing over his love of fame, to which it would not be easy to find a parallel. Such, however, was the height of Arnauld's reputation, and such the affluence of his mind, that it is scarcely reasonable to attribute this disingenuous proceeding to selfish motives. Few men have been more enamoured of the employments, or less covetous of the rewards, of a literary life. For nearly threescore years he lived pen in hand, except when engaged in devotion, or in celebrating the offices of the church of Port-Royal on occasions of peculiar dignity. His was one of those rare natures to which intellectual exertion brings relief rather than lassitude; thus giving to feeblor understanding the assurance, that the living spirit which is in man, if disunited from the burdens of mortality, would be capable of efforts commensurate with an immortal existence.

His book, *De la frequente Communion*, was the commencement of the seventy years' religious war which ended in the destruction of Port-Royal. To restore the severe maxims of Christian antiquity respecting the spiritual qualification of communicants, and thus to raise a standard of church membership incomparably more exalted than that which prevailed in his own generation, was the avowed object of Arnauld. His scarcely concealed purpose was to chastise the lax morality to which the Jesuits had lent their sanction; and to repel their attacks on the more rigid system of St. Cyran. Revised in his prison by that father of the faithful, and sheltered by the commendation of divines of every rank and order, the book—forbearing in style, lofty in sentiment, replete with various learning, and breathing an eloquence at once animated by unhesitating faith, and chastened by the most profound humility—broke like a peal of thunder over the heads of his startled antagonists. Such was the fury of their resentment, that the Marshal de Vihé sagaciously observed, "There must be some secret in all this. The Jesuits are never so excited when nothing but the glory of God is at stake." Though at first struck down by the censures of a conclave of Bishops, with Mazarin at their head, Nouet, the great advocate of the society, returned again and again to the assault. Pulpits fulminated, presses groaned. On the one side the Sorbonne invoked the aid of the civil power, then in feeble hands; on the other, the Jesuits appealed to the Papal See,



then rising in new vigour from the disasters of the preceding century. Arnauld was cited by the Pope, and required by the Cardinal minister of France to appear in his own defence at Rome. Against this infringement of the Gallican liberties, the university, the Sorbonne, and the Parliament of Paris remonstrated, but Mazarin was inflexible.

The Holy See took cognizance of the cause, though the person of the accused was beyond their reach. In his absence, that infallible tribunal decided not to let the world know whether, of the thirty erroneous opinions imputed to Arnauld, twenty and nine were heretical or not. Arnauld himself, however, was unable to stand his ground. For twenty-five years together, he was compelled to live in a voluntary concealment; which his enemies had not the power, nor perhaps the wish, to violate. His retirement was passed in the monastery of Port-Royal, or in one of the adjacent hermitages.

That ancient seat of their order had now been long deserted by his sister Angelique and her associates. Their residence at Paris had not been unfruitful of events. They had exchanged the jurisdiction of the general of their order for that of the archbishop of Paris. On the resignation of Angelique, the abbatial dignity had been made elective in their house. An ineffectual scheme of devoting themselves to the perpetual adoration of the Holy Eucharist, had deeply exercised their thoughts. Occasional miracles had awakened or rewarded their piety. An inspired litany (so it is believed) had fallen insensibly from the pen of sister Agnes, which eight Doctors censured, St. Cyran vindicated, and the Pope suppressed. From his prison at Vincennes, their great apologist directed their consciences, and guided them to the office of educating children of their own sex—a wise and happy project, which brought back into the sphere of ordinary duties, minds soaring with indefinite aims into the regions of mysticism, and wasting, in efforts for an ideal perfection, talents eminently fitted to bless and to improve mankind. To restore the sisterhood to the quiet valley where their predecessors had worshipped, was the next care of St. Cyran. True, it threatened their lives; but “is it not,” he asked, “as well to serve God in an hospital as in a church, if such be his pleasure?” “Are any prayers more acceptable than those of the af-



flicted?" Angelique's heart had a ready answer to such questions from such an inquirer. In that sequestered church where angels, and a still more awful presence, had once dwelt, they could not but still abide, (such was his assurance,) and she returned to seek them there. She came, attended by a large proportion of the ladies of Port-Royal, hailed by the poor and aged, whom in former times she had cherished, and welcomed by her kinsmen and the companions of their religious solitude. It was their first and only meeting. Les Granges (a farm-house on the hill-side) became the residence of the recluses, the gates of the monastery closing on the nuns. Bound by no monastic vows, the men addressed themselves to such employments as each was supposed best qualified to fill. Schools for the instruction of youth in every branch of literature and science were kept by Lancelot, Nicole, Fontaine, and De Sacy. Some laboured at translations of the fathers, and other works of piety. Arnauld applied his ceaseless toils in logic, geometry, metaphysics, and theological debate. Physicians of high celebrity exercised their art in all the neighbouring villages.

Le Maitre and other eminent lawyers addressed themselves to the work of arbitrating in all the dissensions of the vicinage. There were to be seen gentlemen working assiduously as vine-dressers; officers making shoes; noblemen sawing timber and repairing windows; a society held together by no vows; governed by no corporate laws; subject to no common superior; pursuing no joint designs, yet all living in unbroken harmony; all following their respective callings; silent, grave, abstracted, self-afflicted by fastings, watchings, and humiliations—a body of penitents on their painful progress through a world which they had resolved at once to serve and to avoid. From year to year, till death or persecution removed them from the valley of Port-Royal, the members of this singular association adhered pertinaciously to their design; nor among their annals will be found more, we think, than a single name on which rests the imputation of infidelity, or fickleness of purpose. To the nuns, indeed, no such change was possible. Like the inhabitants of Les Granges, they employed themselves in educating the children of the rich and the poor, in almsgiving, and in other works of mercy. Their renunciation of secular cares was combined (no common alliance) with an

entire superiority to all secular interests. Angelique, now the elected abbess, and in that character the ruler of the temporalities of the convent, exhibited a princely spirit of munificence—nourished and sustained by the most severe and self-denying economy. She and her sisterhood reserved for themselves little more than a place in their own list of paupers. So firm was her reliance on the Divine bounty, and so abstemious her use of it, that she hazarded a long course of heroic improvidence, justified by the event and ennobled by the motive, but at once fitted and designated rather to excite the enthusiasm of ordinary mortals, than to afford a model for their imitation. Buildings were erected both at Port-Royal de Paris and Port-Royal des Champs; in the serene majesty of which the worshipper might discern an appropriate vestibule to the temple made without hands, towards which his adoration was directed. Wealth was never permitted to introduce, nor poverty to exclude any candidate for admission as a novice or a pupil. On one occasion twenty thousand francs were given as a relief to a distressed community; on another, four times that sum were restored to a benefactress, whose heart repented a bounty which she had no longer the right to reclaim. Their regular expenditure exceeded by more than sevenfold their certain income; nor were they ever disappointed in their assurance, that the annual deficiency of more than forty thousand francs would be supplied by the benevolence of their fellow Christians. What was the constraining force of charity, Angelique had learned from the study of her own heart, and she relied with a well-founded confidence on the same generous impulse in the hearts of others. The grace, the gaiety, and tenderness of her nature, which might have embellished courts and palaces, were drawn into continual exercise to mitigate the anguish of disease, to soothe the wretched, and to instruct the young. Her hands ministered day and night to the relief of those whose maladies were loathsome or contagious, and her voice allayed their terrors. With playful ingenuity she would teach her associates how to employ the vestments, the furniture, and, when other resources failed, even the sacred plate of the monastery, in clothing the naked, though it left themselves in want, and in feeding the hungry, though it deprived themselves of all present resources. While distributing not merely to the necessities of the in-

digent, but to the relief of persons of her own rank in life, there was in the bosom of Angelique a feeling which revolted not against dependence on alms, for her vows of poverty required it, but against soliciting aid even from her nearest kindred;—a feeling condemned as human, perhaps, in her stern self-judgment, but assuredly one of those emotions which the best of our race are the last to relinquish. And if it be true, as true it surely is, that to the culture and exercise of the benevolent affections as an ultimate end all other ends of human life—knowledge, practical skill, meditative power, self-control, and the rest—are but subservient means, who shall deny to such a course of life as that of the nuns of Port-Royal, the praise of wisdom, however ill he may judge of the wisdom which established and maintained conventical institutions? Some affections, indeed, they could not cultivate. Two of the deepest and the richest mines of their nature, maternal and conjugal love, lay unwrought and unexplored. Yet they lived, as wisdom we are told ought to live, with children round their knees; training them for every office in life, if not with a mother's yearnings, with perhaps something more than a mother's prudence. Over this singular theocracy, male and female, presided St. Cyran, exercising from his dungeon a supreme authority; and under him ruled Antoine Singlin, the general confessor both of the recluses and the nuns. In the conduct of souls, (such is the appropriate style,) Singlin was supposed to excel all the professors of that most critical science. Pascal, De Saci, and Arnauld sat at his feet with child-like docility. Ministers of state, advocates, and bishops, crowded reverently round his pulpit; yet by the confession, or rather the boast of his disciples, he was distinguished neither by learning, talents nor eloquence. The mystery of his absolute dominion over intellects so incomparably superior to his own, is partly, at least, dispelled by what remains of his writings. They indicate a mind at once discriminating and devout, conversant alike with human nature and with the Divine, exerting all its powers to penetrate the labyrinth of man's heart, and recruiting these powers by habitual communion with the source of wisdom.

Guided by such pastors, the Port-Royalists were following out a progress more tranquil than that of John Bunyan's Pilgrim, when the wars of the Fronde rudely scat-

tered the shepherd and the flock. Most of the nuns fled for refuge to Paris, but the recluses (they were Frenchmen still) appeared three hundred strong, in defence of their sequestered valley. Above their hair-shirts glittered coats-of-mail. As the last notes of the anthem died away, the trumpet summoned the worshippers to military exercises. Spears and helmets flashed through the woods—plumes waved over many a furrowed brow—intrenchments, which may still be traced, were thrown up; and the evening-gun, the watchword, and the heavy tread of cavalry, broke a silence till then undisturbed, except by the monastic choir, or the half-uttered prayer of some lonely penitent. De Sericourt felt once again his pulse beat high as he drew out the martial column, and raised the long forgotten words of peremptory command. But ere long a voice more subdued, though not less peremptory, was heard to silence his. De Saci's heart mourned over this reliance on an arm of flesh. Watching the first pause in the new enthusiasm of his associates, he implored them to lay aside their weapons; and in long-suffering to submit themselves and their course to the Supreme Disposer of events. At an instant the whole aspect of Port-Royal was changed. Students returned to their books, penitents to their cells, and handicraftsmen to their ordinary labours. It was a change as sudden and as complete as when, at the bidding of the Genius, the crowded bridge and the rushing river disappeared from the eyes of Mirza, leaving before him nothing but the long hollow Valley of Bagdad, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing on the sides of it.

To one inmate of Port-Royal the terrors of an impending war had brought no disquietude. Angelique remained there, the guardian angel of the place. Hundreds of ruined peasants were daily fed by her bounty. "Perhaps I shall not be able" (the quotation is from one of her letters written at the time) "to send you a letter to-morrow; for all our horses and asses are dead with hunger. Oh! how little do princes know the detailed horrors of war. All the provender of the beasts we have been obliged to divide between ourselves and the starving poor. We have concealed as many of the peasants and of their cattle as we could, in our monastery, to save them from being murdered and losing all their substance. Our dormitory and the chapter-house are full of horses;—we are almost sti-



fled by being pent up with these beasts, but we could not resist the piercing lamentations of the starving and the heart-broken poor. In the cellar we have concealed forty cows. Our court-yards and out-houses are stuffed full of fowls, turkeys, ducks, geese, and asses. The church is piled up to the ceiling with corn, oats, beans, and peas, and with caldrons, kettles, and other things belonging to the cottagers. Our laundry is filled by the aged, the blind, the maimed, the halt, and infants. The infirmary is full of sick and wounded. We have torn up all our rags and linen clothing to dress their sores; we have no more, and are now at our wits' end. We dare not go into the fields for any more, as they are full of marauding parties. We hear that the abbey of St. Cyran has been burned and pillaged. Our own is threatened with an attack every day. The cold weather alone preserves us from pestilence. We are so closely crowded, that deaths happen continually. God, however, is with us, and we are at peace.

That inward peace which Angelique was thus enabled to maintain during the horrors of civil war, was soon to be exposed to a more arduous trial. To the baffled antagonists of Arnould, Port-Royal was an abomination. There dwelt in safety their intended victim, plying his dreaded pen, surrounded by his kindred, his scholars, and his allies; and all engaged in the same contest with the casuistry, the theology, and the morals of the society of Jesus. Against these devoted enemies one Brisacier, a Jesuit, led the assault. His articles of impeachment bore that they despised the Eucharist, that they had neither holy water nor images in their churches, and that they prayed neither to the Virgin nor the Saints. Vain the clearest refutation of calumnies so shocking to the Catholic ears, and vain the archiepiscopal-thunders which rebuked the slanderer. Father Meignier, of the same holy company, denounced to the astonished world a secret conspiracy against the religion of Christ, the leaders of which were the Abbot of St. Cyran and Antoine Arnould—the Voltaire and the Diderot of their age. But human credulity has its limits, and Meignier had overstepped them. For a moment the assailants paused; but at last, the womb of time, fertile in prodigies, gave birth to the far-famed “five propositions” of Father Coruet—a palpable obscure, lying in the dim regions of psychological divinity, and doomed for succes-



sive generations to perplex, to exasperate, and to overwhelm with persecution, or with ridicule, no inconsiderable part of the Christian world. That these five dogmas on the mystery of the divine grace, were to be found within the *Augustinus* of Jansenius, was not the original charge. They were at first denounced by Coruet as opinions drawn from the work of the Bishop of Ypres, by Arnauld and other Doctors of the Gallican church, and by them inculcated on their own disciples. Innocent the Tenth condemned the propositions as heretical; and to the authority of the Holy See, Arnauld and his friends implicitly bowed. In a wood-cut prefixed to this papal constitution by the triumphant Jesuits, Jansenius appeared in his episcopal dress, but accoutred with the aspect, the wings, and the other well-known appendages of an evil spirit, around whom were playing the lightnings of the Vatican.

The man and the heresy thus happily disposed of, a single question remained—Were the peccant propositions to be found in the *Augustinus*? Arnauld declared that he had studied the book from end to end, and could not find them there. That there they were nevertheless to be found, the Jesuits as strongly asserted. To have quoted by chapter and page the offensive passages, would have spoiled the most promising quarrel which had arisen in the Church since the close of the Tridentine Council. Still-born must then have perished the ever-memorable distinction of the *droit* and the *fait*—the *droit* being the justice of the papal censure, which all Catholics admitted—the *fait* being the existence, in the *Augustinus*, of the censured propositions, which all Jansenists denied. The vulgar mode of trial by quotation, being discarded, nothing remained but trial by authority. Annat, the King's Confessor, a Jesuit in religion, and Mazarin, the King's Minister, a Jesuit in politics, each, from different motives, found his account in humiliating the Port-Royalists. Selected by them, a conclave of Parisian Doctors decreed that the five propositions were in the book, and should be in the book. A papal bull affirmed their sentence, and then a second conclave required all the ecclesiastics, and all the religious communities of France, to subscribe their assent to the order which had thus affiliated these bastard opinions on poor Jansenius. That such a defender of the faith as Antoine Arnauld should receive their mandate in silence, the authors of it neither

wished nor expected. In words exactly transcribed, though not avowedly quoted, from Chrysostome and Augustine, he drew up his own creed on the questions of grace and free-will; and in good round terms acquitted the Bishop of Ypres of having written more or less. A third conclave censured the apologist, unconscious apparently that their fulminations would reach the holy fathers of Constantinople and Hippo. They at least reached the object at which they in reality aimed. "Could the most Christian King permit that penitent recluses and young children should any longer assemble for instruction, under the influence of a man convicted of heresy on the subject of efficacious grace, and unable or unwilling to find in the *Augustinus* what the Pope himself had said might be found there?" Anne of Austria listened, Mazarin whispered, and she obeyed. Armed with her authority, her lieutenants appeared at Port-Royal to restore Les Granges and the forests around it to their ancient solitude; and then had for ever fallen the glories of that sacred valley, but for an incident so strange and opportune, as to force back the memory to the precipitate descent from Mount Ida of the Homeric Deities, to rescue, in the agony of his fate, some panting hero on the field of Troy.

Mademoiselle Perrier was the niece of Blaize Pascal. She was a child in her eleventh year, and a scholar residing in the monastery of Port-Royal. For three years and a half she had been afflicted with a *fistula lacrymalis*. The adjacent bones had become carious, and the most loathsome ulcers disfigured her countenance. All remedies had been tried in vain; the medical faculty had exhausted their resources. One desperate experiment remained—it was the actual cautery. For this the day was appointed, and her father had set out on a journey to be present at the operation. Now it came to pass that M. de la Potherie, who was at once a Parisian ecclesiastic, a great-uncle of Angelique and of Arnauld, and an assiduous collector of relics, had possessed himself of one of the thorns composing the crown of which we read in the Evangelists. Great had been the curiosity of the various convents to see it, and the ladies of Port-Royal had earnestly solicited that privilege. Accordingly, on the 24th of March, in the year 1656, the day of the week being Friday, and the week the third in Lent, a solemn procession of nuns,

novices, and scholars, moved along the choir of the monastic church, chanting appropriate hymns, and each one, in her turn, kissing the holy relic. When the turn of Mademoiselle Perrier arrived, she, by the advice of the schoolmistress, touched her diseased eye with the thorn, not doubting that it would effect a cure. She regained her room, and the malady was gone! The cure was instantaneous and complete. So strict, however, was the silence of the abbey, especially in Lent, that except to the companion who shared her chamber, Mademoiselle Perrier did not at first divulge the miracle. On the following day the surgeon appeared with his instruments. The afflicted father was present; exhortations to patience were delivered; and every preparation was complete, when the astonished operator for the first time perceived that every symptom of the disease had disappeared. All Paris rang with the story. It reached the ear of the queen-mother. By her command, M. Felix, the principal surgeon to the king, investigated and confirmed the narrative. The royal conscience was touched. Who but must be moved with such an attestation from on high, of the innocence of a monastery divinely selected as the theatre of so great a miracle? Anne of Austria recalled her lieutenant. Again the recluses returned to their hermitages; the busy hum of schoolboys was heard once more at Port-Royal; and in his ancient retreat Arnauld was permitted to resume his unremitting labours.

Time must be at some discount with any man who should employ it in adjusting the "balance of improbabilities" in such a case as this. But there is one indisputable marvel connected with it. The greatest genius, the most profound scholar, and the most eminent advocate of that age, all possessing the most ample means of knowledge, all carefully investigated, all admitted, and all defended with their pens, the miracle of the Holy Thorn. Europe at that time produced no three men more profoundly conversant with the laws of the material world, with the laws of the human mind; and with the municipal law, than Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre: and they were all sincere and earnest believers. Yet our Protestant incredulity utterly rejects both the tale itself and the inferences drawn from it, and but for such mighty names, might yield to the temptation of regarding it as too contemptible for serious notice. Why is this?—a question which volumes might

be well employed to answer. In this place, a passing notice is all that can be given to it.

Antecedently to their investigation of the evidence, Pascal, Arnauld and Le Maitre, may be supposed to have reduced their reasonings on the subject to the following syllogism:—The true Church is distinguished from all others by the perennial possession of miraculous gifts: But the Church of Rome is the true church. Therefore, when a miracle is alleged to have happened to her fold, the presumption is not against, but in favour of the truth of the statement; and therefore, aided by that presumption, credit is due in such a case to testimony which would be insufficient to substantiate the fact under any other circumstance. *Negamus majorem*. It is not in the spirit of paradox, far less in that of irreverence or levity, that we would maintain the reverse—namely, that a church, really distinguished by the permanent exercise of miraculous powers, would presumably be *not* a true church, but a false.

Probability is the expectation of the recurrence of usual sequences. Certainty is the expectation of the recurrence of sequences believed to be invariable. The disappointment of such an expectation may be the disclosure of some uniform sequence hitherto unknown; that is, of one of the laws of nature, or it may be a miracle—that is, the disturbance of those laws by some power capable of controlling them. He who alleges a miracle, alleges the existence of natural laws; for there can be no exception where there is no rule. Now, to ascribe the laws of nature to any power but that of God, is atheism. To ascribe an *habitual* infringement of these laws to powers at once subordinate and opposed to the divine, is consistent alike with piety and with reason. The analogies of natural and revealed religion not only permit, but require, us thus to judge. For example; the moral law of God is love. That law is habitually infringed by human selfishness. Submission to the legitimate exercise of legitimate authority, is a law from heaven. That law is habitually infringed by human self-will. That within the range of his powers of action, man should be a free agent, is the divine law. That law, as we learn from the Gospels, was habitually infringed in the case of demoniacs. That the blood of the dead should corrupt and not liquefy; that houses should be built and not



fly: that diseases should be cured by therapeutics, or not at all, are all physical laws of nature—that is, of God. Those physical laws, we are told, are habitually infringed within the fold of the Roman Catholic Church. Be it so. But if so, what is the inference? That the Roman Catholic Church is the depositary of divine truth, and the special object of divine favour?—We wot not. Where such truth resides, and such favour rests, there will be a harmony, not elsewhere to be found, with the general laws of the divine economy, and the general principles of the divine government. The law is higher than the anomaly. The rule is more worthy than the exception. That conformity to the eternal ordinances of Heaven, whether psychological or physical, should indicate the possession of truth and holiness in a church, is intelligible. That a systematic counteraction of any such ordinances should indicate the same, is not intelligible. If in any society any law of the divine government is habitually reversed, the inference would seem to be, that such a society is subject to the control of some power opposed to the divine. Will it be answered that every disturbance of the laws of God must proceed from the Author of those laws, and attest his agency and approbation? Why so? His moral laws are violated every instant by rebel man, why not his physical laws by rebel angels? Moses and Paul, and that divine teacher to whom Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre, bowed their hearts and desired to bow their understandings, all assure us that this is no impossible supposition. Or will it be answered that such reasonings impugn the miracles of Christ himself? If so, we at least abandon them as fallacious; for, sooner should our right hand forget its cunning, than be employed to write one word having that tendency. But the cases are utterly dissimilar. Assume the reality both of the series of miracles recorded in the gospels, and of the perennial series of miracles recorded in the Roman Catholic legends, and it is perfectly consistent to discern in the one the seal of truth, and in the other the impress of error. Our Redeemer's miracles blend in perfect harmony, though not in absolute unison, with those laws, physical and moral, which he established in the creation, and fulfilled in the redemption of the world. In their occasion—in their object—in their fulfilment of prophecy—in their attendant doctrine—and in their exceptional character, they are essentially dis-



tinguished from the perennial miracles of Rome. These are in absolute discord with the laws which the miracles of Christ fulfil. If compelled to believe them true, we should not be compelled to refer them to a divine original. But that the truth of such stories as that of the Holy Thorn should ever have commanded the assent of such men as Pascal, Arnauld and Le Maitre, is, after all, a standing wonder, and can be accounted for only by remembering that they assumed as inevitable, and hailed as invaluable, an inference which, as it seems to us, is not to be drawn from the premises, even if established.

Judge as we may of the miraculous attestation to the innocence of Port-Royal, which commanded the assent of Pascal, sentence is irreversibly passed by mankind on the prodigies wrought, at the same time and in the same cause, by the pen of that wonder-working controversialist. In the whole compass of literature, ancient and modern, there is probably nothing in the same style which could bear a comparison with the "Provincial Letters." Their peculiar excellence can be illustrated only by the force of contrast; and, in that sense, the "Letters of Junius" may afford the illustration. To either series of anonymous satires must be ascribed the praise of exquisite address, and of irresistible vigour. Each attained an immediate and lasting popularity; and each has exercised a powerful influence on the literature of succeeding times. But here all resemblance ends. No writer ever earned so much fame as Junius, with so little claim to the respect or gratitude of his readers. He embraced no large principles; he awakened no generous feelings; he scarcely advocated any great social interest. He gives equally little proof of the love of man, and of the love of books. He contributed nothing to the increase of knowledge, and but seldom ministered to blameless delight. His topics and his thoughts were all of the passing day. His invective is merciless and extravagant; and the veil of public spirit is barely thrown over his personal antipathies and inordinate self-esteem. No man was ever so greatly indebted to mere style; yet, with all its recommendations, his is a style eminently vicious. It is laboured, pompous, antithetical—never self-forgetful, never flowing freely, never in repose. The admiration he extorts is yielded grudgingly; nor is there any book so universally read which might become extinct with

so little loss to the world as "The Letters of Junius." Reverse all this, and you have the characteristics of the "Provincial Letters." Their language is but the transparent, elastic, unobtrusive medium of thought. It moves with such quiet gracefulness as entirely to escape attention, until the matchless perspicacity of discussions, so incomprehensible under any management but his, forces on the mind an inquiry into the causes of so welcome a phenomenon. Pascal's wit, even when most formidable, is so tempered by kindness, as to show that the infliction of pain, however salutary, was a reluctant tribute to his supreme love of truth. His playfulness is like the laugh of childhood—the buoyancy of a heart which has no burden to throw off, and is gay without an effort. His indignation is never morose, vindictive, or supercilious: it is but philanthropy kindling into righteous anger and generous resentment, and imparting to them a tone of awful majesty. The unostentatious master of all learning, he finds recreation in toils which would paralyze an ordinary understanding; yet so sublimated is that learning with the spirit of philosophy, as to make him heedless of whatever is trivial, transient, and minute, except as it suggests or leads to what is comprehensive and eternal. But the canons of mere literary criticism were never designed to measure that which constitutes the peculiar greatness of the author of the "Provincial Letters." His own claim was to be tried by his peers—by those, who in common with him, possess a mental vision purified by contemplating that light in which is no darkness at all, and affections enlarged by a benevolence which, having its springs in heaven, has no limits to its diffusion on earth. Among his ascetic brethren in the valley of Port-Royal, he himself recognised the meet, if not the impartial judges of his labours. They hailed with transport an ally, who, to their own sanctity of manners, and to more than their own genius, added popular arts to which they could make no pretension. Perhaps they were taught by the excellent M. Singlin to regard and censure such exultation as merely human. That great spiritual anatomist probably rebuked and punished the glee which could not but agitate the innermost folds of Arnauld's heart, as he read his apologist's exquisite analysis of the *Pouvoir Prochain*, and of the *Graces Suffisantes qui ne sont pas efficaces*. For history records the misgivings of

Mademoiselle Pascal, how far M. Singlin would put up with the indomitable gaiety which would still chequer with some gleams of mirth her brother's cell at Les Granges, even after his preternatural ingenuity had been exhausted in rendering it the most desolate and cheerless of human abodes.

Whatever may have been his treatment of his illustrious penitents, the good man was not long permitted to guide them through their weary pilgrimage. The respite obtained for Port-Royal by the Holy Thorn and the "Provincial Letters," expired with the death of Mazarin and with the authority of the Queen-mother. Louis began, as he believed, to act for himself—a vain attempt for a man who could never think for himself. The genius, such as it was, of the dead minister, had still the mastery over the inferior mind of the surviving monarch. Louis had been taught by the Cardinal to fear and to hate De Retz, Jansenism, and Port-Royal. Poor Singlin was therefore driven away, and in due time consigned to the Bastille. At the bidding of the King, a synod of the clergy of France drew up an anti-Jansenist test, to be taken by all ecclesiastics, and by all religious communities, male and female; fortified, of course, by effective penalties. They were all required to subscribe their names to a declaration that the "five propositions," in their heretical sense, were to be found in the *Augustinus*, with no exception in favour of those who had never seen the book, or of those who could not read Latin. Nor was this an ineffectual menace. Blow after blow fell on those who refused, and even on those who were expected to refuse, thus to condemn the Bishop of Ypres. Port-Royal was foremost among such obdurate recusants. Their schools, male and female, were dispersed. Arnould and the other recluses were banished from the valley. The admission of novices and postulantes was interdicted to the abbess; and her ancient monastery was threatened with suppression as contumacious and heretical.

Angelique Arnould was now sinking under the pressure of infirmity and of old age. Half a century had elapsed since the commencement of her reforms, and her tale of threescore years and ten had been fully told; but ere she yielded her soul to him who gave it, she rose from her dying bed to make one more effort for the preservation of the house, so long devoted, under her guidance, to works of mercy and to exercises of penitence and prayer. Surrounded

by a throng of weeping children, and by her eldest associates maintaining their wonted composure, she, for the last time, quitted Port-Royal des Champs, giving and receiving benedictions, and went to die at the convent of Port-Royal de Paris. She found the gates guarded, and the court-yards filled by a troop of archers, the executioners of the royal mandate for expelling the scholars, novices, postulantes, and other unprofessed inmates of the house. During eight successive days, one after another of these helpless women was torn from the place around which their affections had twined; and from the arms of the dying mother, whom they loved with the tenderness of children, and regarded with more than filial reverence. Seventy-five persons were thus successively separated from her, as from hour to hour she descended to the tomb, under bodily and mental sufferings described with fearful minuteness in the obituaries of Port-Royal. "At length our good Lord has seen fit to deprive us of all. Fathers, sisters, disciples, children—all are gone. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Such was her announcement to Madame de Sevigné of the emptying of the first vial of Kingly wrath. To the Queen-mother she addressed herself in a loftier, though not in a less gentle tone. At each momentary remission of her agonies, she dictated to Anne of Austria a letter, long and justly celebrated as a model of epistolary eloquence. It has no trace of debility, still less of resentment. Her defence is as clear and as collected, as though, in the fulness of health, she had been conducting the cause of another. Without a reproach or a murmur, she exposes the wrongs of her sisterhood, and the error of her persecutors. For herself she asks no sympathy; but, from the verge of the world she had so long renounced, and was now about to quit for ever, she invokes from the depositaries of worldly power, the justice they owed to man, and the submission due to the ordinances of heaven. "Now, my earthly business is done!" was her grateful exclamation as this letter was closed; and then commenced a mental and bodily strife, recorded, perhaps, but too faithfully by her biographers. These pages, at least, are no fit place for the delineation of a scene over which the sternest spectator must have wept, and the most hardened must have prayed fervently for the sufferer and for himself. From the dark close of a life so holy and so blameless, and from the hope, and peace, and joy, which at length cast

over her departing spirit some radiance from that better state on the confines of which she stood, lessons may be drawn which we have no commission to teach, and which are perhaps best learned without the intervention of any human teacher. Yet, even in Port-Royal itself, there were not wanting some to whom this admonition of the vanity of human things was addressed in vain.

Among that venerable society, the Sœur Flavie Passart was unrivalled in the severity of her self-discipline, and the splendour of her superhuman gifts. As often as illness confined her to her bed, so often did a miracle restore her. The dead returned to her with messages from the other world. No saint in the calendar withheld his powerful influence in the court of heaven when she invoked it. Like many wiser folks, Sœur Flavie discovered at last, and doubtless to her own surprise, that she had become (there are none but masculine terms to express it,) a liar and a knave. The same discovery was opportunely made by her associates, and arrested her progress to the elective dignities of the abbey. A penitent confession of her Jansenist errors, a denunciation of the more eminent ladies of Port-Royal as her seducers, and a retraction of her heretical belief in the innocence of Jansenius, might, however, still pave her way to the abbatial throne. So judged the Sœur Flavie, and so decided M. Perifixe, the then archbishop of Paris. She merely asked the imprisonment of twenty-six of her rivals. He cheerfully accorded so reasonable a boon. Repairing in pontifical state to the Parisian monastery, he again tendered the anti-Jansenist test. Angelique was gone; but her spirit and her constancy survived. The simple-hearted nuns thought that it would be a mere falsehood to attest the existence of "five propositions" in a book which they had never seen, and could not read; and truth, they knew, was the command of God, let Pope, Cardinal, or Archbishop, say what they would to the contrary. Perifixe interdicted their admission to the holy sacrament. "Well, my lord," they replied, "there is in heaven a Judge who reads the heart, and to him we commend our cause." "Ay, ay," rejoined the exemplary prelate, "when we get to heaven it will be time enough to consider that, and see how things go there."

Eight days elapsed; and still no change of purpose, no subscription to the test. Preceded by his crosier, the mi-



tre on his brows, his train borne by ecclesiastics, and followed by a long line of archers, the Archbishop re-appeared. Much he discoursed respecting his own mildness, and much of the obduracy of the nuns. In proof of both, twenty-three of their number were conveyed to separate places of confinement. But the fruits of her treachery were not reaped by the Sœur Flavie. By the influence of the Archbishop, the Sœur Dorothee Perdreau was elected abbess. That lady established her residence at Paris; she effected a final separation of the two monasteries; and gave entertainments at the Parisian convent which might vie with the most brilliant of any which formed the boast of the neighbouring hotels. For ten months her exiled sisters remained in prison. Perifixe then ordered their return to Port-Royal des Champs, there to be excluded from the sacraments of the church, and to die unanointed and unannealed. The recluses of the valley were to be seen there no more. They lived in hiding-places, or pined away in dungeons. Singlin died of extremity of suffering in the Bastille. It must be admitted, that if the existence of the "five propositions" in the *Augustinus* was not verified by the attestation of a score or two of old ladies, Louis and his clergy have not to bear the responsibility of so great a misfortune to the church.

Twelve years before, the miracle of the Holy Thorn and the genius of Pascal had rescued Port-Royal from impending destruction. A person scarcely less unlike the common herd of mortals than the author of the "Provincial Letters," and whose elevation had been owing to events which some may think more miraculous than the cure of Pascal's niece, now interposed in their behalf, and with not inferior success.

Anne Genevieve de Bourbon was born in the year 1619, in the castle of Vincennes, where her father, Henry, Prince of Orleans, was then confined. The misfortunes of her family, and especially the execution of the Constable Montmorency, her maternal uncle, had predisposed in early youth, to serious thought, a mind distinguished to the last by an insatiable craving for strong emotions. To renounce the world, and to take the veil among the sisterhood of Carmelites of the Faubourg St. Jaques, were the earliest of the projects she had formed to baffle the foul fiend ennui. A counter-project, devised by her mother, was, that the young princess should present herself at a court ball. Ma-

ternal authority, perhaps inclination, on the one side, and conscientious scruples on the other, balanced and distressed the spirit of the high-born maiden. She betook herself for guidance to the Faubourg St. Jaques. A council on the arduous question was held with all the form, conventual and theatrical, which the statutes of the order and the fancy of the nuns required or suggested. As presidents, sat two of their number, one impersonating the grace of Penitence, the other the virtue of Discretion. From the judgment-seat so occupied, went forth the sentence that Anne Genevieve de Bourbon should attend the ball, and should surrender herself "de bonne foi" to all the dresses and ornaments prepared for her; but that in immediate contact with her person she should be armed with the penitential girdle, commonly called a *cilice*. Above the talisman which thus encircled that young and lovely form, glowed the bright panoply of the *marchande des modes*. Beneath it throbbed a heart responsive in every pulse to the new intoxication. Penitence and Discretion took their flight, no more to return till, after the lapse of many a chequered year, the *cilice* was again bound over a heart, then, alas! aching with remorse, and bowed down with the contrite retrospect of many a crime and many a folly. At the Hotel de Rambouillet, she was initiated, with her brother, afterwards "the great Condé," into the Parisian mystery of throwing over the cold hard lineaments of downright selfishness, the fine-woven draperies of polite literature, of sentimentality, and of taste. She had scarcely read any books; but she could discourse eloquently on all. Mistress of the histrionic art, all words fell bewitchingly from a voice with which every look, and gesture, and attitude, combined in graceful harmony. De Retz notices the exquisite effect of the sudden bursts of gaiety which would at times dispel her habitual, but not inexpressive languor. Sarazin and Voiture were proud to receive their laurels from her hands, or to beg them at her feet. Statesmen and generals sought or seemed to seek, her counsels. Even her mitred correspondents infused into their pastoral admonitions a delicacy and a glow of language, which reveal alike her skill to fascinate, and their desire to please.

Vows of celibacy no longer promised an escape from lassitude. At the age of twenty-three, she gave her hand to Henry D'Orleans, Duc de Longueville, who had already

numbered forty-seven years. The Duke repaired as plenipotentiary to the conferences at Munster. The Duchess remained at Paris, the idol of the court. Unexplored, at least by us, be the scandalous chronicle of a scandalous age. She rejoined him in time to shelter, if not entirely to save her reputation. As she floated down the Meuse in a royal progress, (for such it really was,) the sister of Condé was received with more than royal honours. Troops lined the banks; fortresses poured forth their garrisons to welcome her approach; the keys of Namur, then held by Spain, were laid at her feet; complimentary harangues hailed her arrival at Liege, Maestricht, and Ruremonde; and amidst the roar of cannon, and the acclamations of ten thousand voices, the triumphant beauty was restored to the arms of her husband. At Munster she exhibited the state and splendour of a crowned head. But her heart was depressed by ennui, if not agitated by more guilty emotions. Tours were undertaken, palaces built, wars of etiquette were successfully waged with rival princesses; diplomatic intrigues twisted and untwisted; but gloom still settled in the spirits of her to whose diversion all other minds were ministering. She returned to Paris. Condé had exalted the glories of her house. Mazarin got up an Italian opera for her amusement. Benserade and Voiture referred to her award the question then agitating the whole Parisian world, of the comparative excellence of their rival sonnets. She became a mother. On every side the tedium of existence was assailed by new excitement; but melancholy still brooded over her. Relief was, however, at hand. The dissensions, the wars, the intrigues of the *Fronde*, filled the void which nothing else could fill. Her share in that mad revel is known to all the readers of De Retz, La Rochefoucault, De Monspensier, and De Motteville. Her younger brother, the Prince de Conti, was but a puppet in her hands. With Condé, she quarrelled one day, and made it up the next. De Retz was alternately her ruler and her dupe. Marsailac alone acquired a lasting influence over her mind. He flattered, amused, animated, and governed her, to whose government alone the factious and the frivolous were alike willing to bow. With her infant in her arms, she appeared on the balcony, at the Hotel de Ville, "beautiful," says De Retz, "with her dress apparently, but not really, neglected, while at the Grève, from

the pavement to the tiles, was a countless multitude of men shouting with transport, and women shedding tears of tenderness." Never did mob-idolatry assume a more bewitching aspect. Hushed into affectionate silence were the harsh voices of the many-headed monster, as the peerless dame gave birth to "Charles Paris," her second son. Crowded even was that sick-chamber with black-robed counsellors, and plumed officers, soliciting her commands for the defence of the blockaded capital. Peace came, and she met almost on equal terms the haughty widow and mother of the kings of France. For her brother and her husband, she demanded and obtained the government of provinces; for herself a state ball at the Hotel de Ville, with the presence of the queen-mother to grace her triumph; for Marsillac the entrée at the Louvre in his carriage; for his wife a tabouret. There are limits to human endurance. Against the entrée and the tabouret the whole nobility of France awoke in generous resentment. Astræa once more took her flight. Condé, Conti, and poor De Longueville himself, were conducted to Vincennes; our heroine fled to Normandy. Besieged in the castle of Dieppe, she escaped on foot, and, after a march of some leagues along the coast, reached a fishing-boat, which lay at anchor there, awaiting her arrival. A storm was raging; but, in defiance of all remonstrances, she resolved to embark. In an instant she was struggling for life in the water. Rescued with difficulty, but nothing daunted, she mounted behind a horseman, and for fifteen days evaded the pursuit of her enemies, in mean and desolate hiding-places. At length, reaching Havre, an English vessel conveyed her to Rotterdam. From that disastrous eclipse, she emerged with undiminished splendour. From Stenay, Turenne advanced to meet her at the head of all his forces. She became a party with him to the convention by which the King of Spain bound himself to maintain the war with France till the liberation of the three captive princes; and sixty thousand crowns were promised for the support of the table and equipages of Turenne and the Princesse de Longueville. That more tender bonds than those of war and treason did not unite them, is ascribed by her biographers to her preference for one La Moussaye, the commandant of Stenay. There she braved the denunciations of her sovereign, opposing one manifesto to another, and

adding to her other glories the praise of diplomatic eloquence. Again the centre of all intrigue, the delirium, whether ambitious or voluptuous, of her heart, yielded for awhile (and where beats the heart which is not enigmatical?) to remembrances, at once bitter and soothing, of the Carmelites of St. Jaques, with whom, in days of youth and innocency, she had joined in far different aspirations. But in the *phantasmagoria* at Paris, the scenes are again shifted. The Parliaments remonstrate, the Princes are enlarged, the Cardinal exiled, and a royal declaration attests the innocence of Mademoiselle de Longueville, "Vous n'êtes plus criminelle si ce n'est de lèse amours," was the greeting on this occasion of her favourite Sarazin. She rewarded the poet with an embassy to the Spanish government; for the Duchess had now undertaken a negotiation for peace between the two crowns. Her second triumph, however, was still incomplete. She returned in all the pomp of a conqueror to Paris, and once more met on equal terms the majesty of France.

It may reasonably be doubted whether there exists at this day one human being who has found leisure and inclination to study, with exact attention, the history of the wars of the "Fronde." But that they disturbed the peace, and postponed the rising greatness of a mighty nation, they would have as little to commend them to serious regard, as the cabals one may suppose to distract the fair council presiding over the internal economy of Almacks. To assert, during the weakness of a long minority, some popular rights not otherwise to be maintained, and to restore the greater nobility to the powers of which Richelieu had dispossessed them, were indeed motives which gave some show of dignity to the first movements of the Frondeurs; but meaner passions, more frivolous questions, interests more nakedly selfish, or in themselves more contemptible, never before or since roused a people to war, or formed a pretext for rebellion. Cardinals, Judges, Monarchs, Princesses, Courtiers, and Generals, whirl before the eye in that giddy maze—intriguing, lying, jesting, imprisoning, and killing, as though Bacchus, Momus, and Moloch, had for awhile usurped a joint and absolute dominion over the distracted land. Among the figurantes in this dance of death, none is more conspicuous than the Duchesse de Longueville. In the third and last of these preposterous



wars, the royal authority triumphed, and her star declined; but it now set to rise again in a new and far purer radiance. Like the wisest of the sons of men, she had applied her heart to see if there was any good thing under the sun; and, like him, she returned with a spirit oppressed by the hopeless pursuit, and proclaiming that all is vanity. "I have no wish so ardent" (such is her confession to the Prioress of the Carmelites) "as to see this war at an end, that, for the rest of my days, I may dwell with you, and apart from all the world besides. Till peace is concluded, I may not do so. My life seems to have been given me but to prove how bitter and how oppressive are the sorrows of this mortal existence. My attachments to it are broken, or rather crushed. Write to me often, and confirm the loathing I feel for this sublunary state."

It was a weary way which the returning penitent had to retrace. Now rising towards the heaven to which she aspired, her fainting spirit would again sink down to the earth she had too much loved. Long and arduous was the struggle—tardy, and to the last precarious, the conquest. But the conquest was achieved. Gainsay it who will, the spirit of man is the not unfrequent, though the hidden scene of revolutions, as real as that which from the seed corrupting in the soil beneath us, draws forth the petals, diffusing on every side their fragrance, and reflecting in every varied hue the light of heaven. He who, with disappointed hopes, and the satiety of all the pleasures which earth has to offer, seeks refuge in that sanctuary which in the heat and confidence of youth he had despised, may well expect that human judges will note the change with incredulity or derision: nor, perhaps, has he much right to complain. There ever must be some ground for others to doubt whether the seeming love of long-neglected virtues be more than a real distaste for long-practised vices. That the *rouée* should pass into the *ennuyée*, and the *ennuyée* into the *devotee*, may appear as natural as that the worm should become a chrysalis, and the chrysalis a butterfly. To the wits be their jests, and to the mockers their gibes. To those who can feel for some of the deepest agonies of our common nature, such jests will be at least less welcome than the belief that, when innocence is gone, all is not lost; and the conviction, that over the soul blighted and depraved by criminal indulgence, may still be effectually brooding

an influence more gentle than a mother's love, and mightier than all the confederate powers of darkness and of guilt. Few readers of the later correspondence of the Duchess of Longueville, will doubt that the change in her character was the result of such a renovating energy. At the age of thirty-four she finally retired from the cabals in which she had borne so conspicuous a part. Condé had now taken up arms against her native country, and Turenne commanded her armies. The Duchess mourned alike the success and the reverses of her brother. De Longueville, a kind-hearted man, hailed with unabated tenderness her return to the paths of wisdom and peace. She watched with true congenial care over his declining years, and even extended her kindness to one of his illegitimate daughters.

Touched by her altered conduct, the King and the Queen's mother admitted her not merely to their favour, but to a high place in their regard; nor are there many incidents in the life of Louis so amiable, as the affectionate gentleness of his demeanour to this once dangerous but now self-humbled enemy. On the death of her husband she expended immense sums in the attempt to repair, in some degree, the calamities which the war of the Princes had inflicted on the peasantry. In a single year she restored to freedom, at her own expense, nine hundred persons imprisoned for debt; and had a list of no less than four thousand prisoners subsisting altogether on her bounty. The austere penances which at least attested her sincerity, were combined on all becoming occasions with the princely magnificence due to her exalted station. Her eldest son, the Comte Du Dunois, a feeble-minded youth, turned Jesuit, took orders, escaped to Rome, and was placed under permanent restraint. The Comte St. Paul, her only other child, was a wild profligate. He enjoyed ecclesiastical benefices of the annual value of 50,000 crowns, which she compelled him to resign unconditionally to the disposal of the King. Louis revered and applauded such unwonted disinterestedness, and exerted all the magic of his flattery to win her back again to the court and to the world. But she had learned a salutary lesson of self-distrust. In the valley of Port-Royal she built a modest residence, where she found repose, if not serenity; and soothed with humble hopes a spirit too deeply contrite to be visited by more buoyant feelings. Her own hand has traced the history of

her declining years; nor have the most pathetic preachers of that age of pulpit eloquence bequeathed to us a more impressive admonition. Whoever would learn what are the woes of ministering, by reckless self-indulgence, to the morbid cravings of the heart for excitement; or how revolting is the late return to more tranquil pursuits; or how gloomy is the shadow which criminal passions, even when exercised, will yet cast over the soul they have long possessed; or how, through that gloom, a light pure as its divine original, may dawn over the benighted mind with still expanding warmth and brightness—should study the Letters and the Confessions of Anne Genevieve, Duchesse de Longueville.

To explain what was the task she undertook, we must return a little in our former steps.

Such, and so conversant with the ways of the world was the diplomatist who at length appeared for the rescue of the Ladies of Port-Royal. No less skilful hand could have unravelled the folds in which the subject had been wrapped by intrigue and bigotry.

The original anti-Jansenist test had been promulgated by a Synod of the clergy of France, adopted by the Sorbonne, and enforced by Louis. To the remonstrances of the nuns against being required to attest by their signatures a matter of fact of which they had, and could have no knowledge, the King had answered only by reiterating the demand for a “pure and simple” subscription. “His Majesty,” observed the Princess de Guemene, “is supreme. He can make princes of the blood, bishops and archbishops. Why not martyrs also?” It was a branch of the royal prerogative which he was nothing loath to exercise. De Retz abdicated the See of Paris, and was succeeded by De Marca, the author of the Formulary. Availing themselves of so happy an occasion, the Jesuits at Clermont drew up a thesis, in which was propounded, for the acceptance of the faithful, the naked dogma of Papal infallibility, not only on points of doctrine but as to mere matters of fact. Arnauld and his friends protested. Their protest was refuted by the hand and the torch of one of the great polemics of that age—the public executioner. De Marca did not live long; and his death brought with it a truce in this holy war. His successor in the see of Paris, M. de Perifixe, resumed it, but with greater subtlety. He taught that it

was enough if a matter of fact, asserted by the Pope, were believed not *d'une foi divine*, but *d'une foi humaine*. Whether, in the Virgilian elysium, the recompense awarded to the inventors of useful arts awaits the authors of useful distinctions has not been revealed to us; but if so, De Perifixe may there have found his recompense. On earth it was his hard fate to be refuted by Nicole, to be laughed at by the Parisians, and to be opposed by the ladies of Port-Royal. They had no faith, divine or human, and they would profess none, as to the contents of a large folio written in a language of which they were entirely ignorant. "Pure as angels," said the incensed Archbishop; "they are proud as devils!" How he punished their pride has already been recorded.

When a great dignitary has lost his temper, there is nothing which he should more studiously avoid than the being hooked into the sort of contemporary record which the French call a *procès verbal*. In the midst of the nuns of Port-Royal, De Perifixe had stormed and scolded more in the style of a *poissarde* than of an Archbishop of Paris; and when the chronicle of all his sayings and doings on the occasion stole into light, with all the forms of notarial certificates, he found himself, to his unutterable dismay, the hero of as broad a farce as had ever delighted that laughter-loving city. It was the single joke of which the nuns had ever been either the willing or the unintentional authors; and they soon found to their cost that it was no light matter to have directed the current of ridicule against an archiepiscopal, and, through him, against a royal censor.

The invincible opposition of the Port-Royalists to the test, had awakened a more extended resistance. Men had begun to deny the right of assemblies of the clergy, or of the King himself, to impose such subscriptions. To retreat was, however, no longer possible. Louis, therefore, by the advice of the Jesuits, desired the Pope himself first to draw up a Formula, which should declare his own infallible knowledge of matters of fact; and then to require the universal acceptance of it. Alexander the Seventh exultingly complied. Subscription to De Marca's test was now exacted by papal authority, with the addition that the subscribers should call on the Deity himself to attest their sincerity. To this demand the great body of the clergy of France submitted, but still the resistance of the nuns of Port-Royal was unsubdued. Four years of persecution—



of mean, unmanly, worrying persecution—followed. The history of it fills many volumes of the Conventual Annals, exciting in the mind of him who reads them, feelings of amazement and disgust, of respect and pity, strong enough to carry him through what it must be confessed is but a wearisome task. From the poor remnant of earthly comforts which these aged women had retained, the mean-spirited king, his bigoted confessors, and his absurd archbishop, daily stole whatever could be so pilfered. From their means of preparing the world where the wicked cease from troubling, every deduction was made which sacerdotal tyranny could enforce. But no tyranny could induce them to call on the God of truth to attest a lie. One after another went down, with no priestly absolution, to graves which no priest would bless; strong, even amidst the weakness and the mortal agonies of nature, in the assurance, that the path to heaven could not be found in disobedience to the immutable laws which Heaven itself had established.

Among the bishops of France, four had been faithful enough to insist on the *droit* and the *fait*. In publishing the papal bull, they attached to it an express statement of their dissent from this new pretension of Rome. Of these prelates, one was a brother of the great Arnauld, and bore the same name. Alexander the Seventh was now on his death-bed; he had even received extreme unction. But at the awful hour he retained enough of human or of papal feeling to launch against the four prelates, a brief full of menaces, which it devolved on his successor, Rospigliosi, to execute. But Clement the Ninth was a man of far greater and more Christian spirit. He had mourned over the distractions of the Church, and had made it his appropriate glory to mediate between the contending crowns of Spain and Portugal. To him the Duchesse de Longueville addressed herself on behalf of Port-Royal, in a letter of the most insinuating and impressive eloquence. His nuncio at Paris was made to feel all the powers of that fascinating influence which she still knew how to employ. At her hotel, and in her presence, a secret committee met daily for the management of this affair. It was composed of three bishops, aided by Arnauld and Nicole. Condé himself was induced by his sister to lend the weight of his authority to her projects. Even Le Tellier was circumvented



by the toils spread for him by this great mistress of intrigue. For nearly eighteen months she laboured to overcome the obstacles which the pride of Rome and of Louis, and the ill-will of the Father Annat, his confessor, opposed to her. All difficulties at length yielded to her perseverance and her diplomatic skill. The four bishops were content to denounce the "five propositions" as heretical, and to promise "a submission of respect and discipline" as to the *fact*, declaring that "they would not contest the papal decision, but would maintain an absolute silence on the subject." One of them insisted on adding an express statement of the infallibility of the Church respecting such matters of fact as the contents of a book. Clement the Ninth was, however, satisfied. Peace was restored to the Gallican Church. Medals were struck, speeches made, and solemn audiences accorded by Louis to Arnauld and his associates. De Saci and his fellow-prisoners were set at liberty. Port-Royal was once more permitted to recruit her monastery, to open her schools, and to give shelter to her dispersed recluses. Among the events which signalized the pacification of Clement the Ninth, one demands especial notice. Malebranche had signed the Formula. He now frankly avowed that he had condemned Jansenius without reading his book, and implored the pardon of God and of man for his guilty compliance. It may perhaps be consolatory to some, in our own times, to be informed, that in censuring as heretical the book of a professor of divinity, of which they knew nothing but the title-page, they might have pleaded the example of so great a man—a comfort, however, to which they will not be entitled, unless they imitate also the example of his repentance.

Ten years elapsed from this pacification before the close of the extraordinary career of the Duchess of Longueville; and they were years distinguished in the chronicle of Port-Royal by little else than the peaceful lives and the tranquil deaths of many of the inhabitants of the valley. In their annals are to be found more than a century of names, to which their admirers have promised not only an eternal reward, but such immortality as the world has to bestow. Overburdened as we are by the ever increasing debt of admiration to the illustrious dead, these promises will hardly be fulfilled, at least by our busy age: nor is it easy even for

one who has carefully travelled through the whole of these biographies; to select from among the female candidates for posthumous renown, those to whom such homage is especially due. Their portraitures have a strong resemblance to each other. To each, in her turn, is awarded the praise of passive virtue, of fervent piety, and of austerities from which nature shrinks. If a sense of the ludicrous will occasionally provoke a passive smile, or if a sigh must now and then be given to the melancholy superstitions of which they were the blameless victims, it is at least impossible to contemplate, irreverently or unmoved, the image of purity and peace, of mutual kindness and cheerful acquiescence in the Divine will, which discloses itself at each successive aspect of that holy sisterhood.

The sternest Protestant cannot rouse himself at once from the influence of this course of reading: nor resume with an effort his conviction, that it is amidst the charities of domestic life that female virtue finds the highest exercise, and female piety the most sublime elevation. He knows, indeed, that exuberant as is the charter of his faith in models of every human virtue, and in precepts of wisdom under every varied form, it contains not so much as a single example, or a solitary admonition, from which the Confessors of Port-Royal could have shown that a retreat to such cloisters was in accordance with the revealed will of God. He knows also, that thus to counteract the eternal laws of nature, and the manifest designs of Providence, must be folly, however specious the pretext or solemn the guise which such folly may assume. He is assured that filial affection, cheerfully, temperately, bountifully, and thankfully using the gifts of Heaven, is the best tribute which man can render to Him who claims for himself the name and the character of a Father. But with all this knowledge, the disciple of Luther or of Calvin will yet close the *vies edificatès* and the *necrologies* of these holy women, not without a reluctance to doubt, and a wish to believe, that they really occupied the high and awful station to which they aspired; and stood apart from the world, its pollutions, and its cares, to offer with purer hearts than others, and with more acceptable intercessions, the sacrifice of an uninterrupted worship, replete with blessings to themselves and to mankind. Peace then to their errors, and unquoted be any of the innumerable extravagances

which abound in the records of their lives. To the Recluses who shared, without ever breaking their solitude, we rather turn for illustrations of the spirit which animated and characterized the valley of Port-Royal.

On the pacification of Clement IX., Louis Sebastian le Nain de Tillemont, who had been educated in the schools of Nicole and Lancelot, returned in the maturity of his manhood to a hermitage which he had erected near the courtyard of the abbey. Such had been his attainments as a boy, that the pupil had soon exhausted the resources of those profound teachers, and in his twentieth year had commenced those works on ecclesiastical history, which have placed him in the very foremost rank, if not at the head, of all who have laboured in that fertile though rugged field. To the culture of it, his life was unceasingly devoted. Though under the direction of De Saci he had obtained admission to holy orders, he refused all the rich preferments pressed on him by the admirers of his genius. Year after year passed over him, unmarked by any event which even the pen of his affectionate biographer, Fontaine, could record. "He lived," says that amiable writer, "alone, and with no witness but God himself, who was ever present with him, and who was all in all to him." It was only in an habitual and placid communion with that one associate, that he sought relief from his gigantic toils; and with a spirit recruited by that communion, he returned to the society of the Emperors, the Popes, the Fathers, and the Saints, who were to him as companions and as friends. To a man long conversant with the anxieties of a secular calling, the soft lights and the harmonious repose of such a picture may perhaps exhibit a delusive aspect; yet it can hardly be a delusion to believe, that for such colloquy with the minds which yet live in books, and with that Mind which is the source of all life, would be well exchanged whatever ambition, society, fame, or fortune, have to confer on their most favoured votaries.

So at least judged one, whom fame and fortune wooed with their most alluring smiles. Racine had been trained at Port-Royal, in the same schools and by the same masters as Tillemont. For the great dramatist, no sympathy could of course be expressed by the austere dwellers in the desert; and perhaps the friendship of Boileau may have consoled him for the alienation of his old teacher Nicole.

But when, in his *visionnaires*, that devout and learned man denounced the writers of stage-plays as the *Empoisonneurs publics des âmes*, Racine keenly felt and resented the reproach. Like most controversialists, he lived to repent the asperity of his language: but his repentance yielded fruits, the like of which have rarely been gathered from that bitter stem. The author of *Andromaque* not only sought the pardon, and regained the friendship of Arnauld and Nicole, but actually renounced the drama, exhorted his son to abandon poetry, and became the advocate and the historian of Port-Royal, and secured for his bones a resting-place in that consecrated soil. Happily for the world, a method was afterwards discovered of reconciling the exercise of Racine's genius with the severe principles which Nicole had instilled into him when a boy, and had revived with such decisive effect in his riper days. *Esther* and *Athalie* were allowed, even at Port-Royal, to be works not unseemly for a man whose single talent was that of writing verses, and who, if he could do nothing better, was at least acknowledged to do that well. But alas for human consistency! He who traced those majestic scenes where reliance on the Divine arm triumphs over all human regards and terrors, was doomed himself to pine away and to die of a hard saying of the hard master it was his ill fate to serve. His guilt was to have drawn up a Memoir on the means of relieving the starving poor at Paris. His punishment, the indignant exclamation of the great Louis, "Because he is an all-accomplished versifier, does he presume that he knows every thing? Because he is a great poet, does he mean to become a minister?" Well might the sensitive spirit which such a feather could crush, wish with Wolsey that he had served his God as faithfully as his King, and repine amidst the pageantries of Versailles for the devout composure of Port-Royal.

And many were the eminent men who sought and enjoyed that repose. There dwelt the Prince de Conti, one of the heroes of the Fronde, and still more memorable for his penitence and restitutions; of whom it is recorded, that his young children were so impressed by his absolute devotedness to the Divine will, as to conceal from him the story of Abraham, lest the example of the sacrifice of Isaac should be imitated at their own expense. There, too, resided the Duc de Lincourt, on whom fortune had ex-



hausted all her bounties, and who, under the loss of them all, rose to the utmost heroism of a meek, unrepining, and cheerful resignation. Pontchateau, a noble, a courtier, an ambassador, and at length the apostolical prothonotary at Rome, brought all the strange vicissitudes of his life to an end, by becoming, under the name of Le Mercier, a common labourer in the gardens, and a devout worshipper in the church of Port-Royal. But this chronicle of worthies, spreading out into an interminable length, must give place to a very brief account of the events which reduced to a desert the solitudes which they had cultivated and adorned.

Amidst the contentions of the Gallican Church, full proof had been given of the keen edge of those weapons which might be borrowed from the papal arsenals. It readily occurred to the sufferers, that the resource which the Jesuits had so successfully employed, might be turned against themselves. Pascal had startled the civilized world with the exposure of Molinist errors, hostile not merely to the Catholic creed, but to those principles of virtue which are the very cement of human society. They had imputed to Jansenius five heresies on the obscure subjects of divine grace and human freedom; but who could number the propositions in which Escobar and his associates had spurned the authority of the decalogue itself? The assiduity of the bishops of Arras and St. Pons collected sixty-five of these scandalous dogmas, and these they transmitted to Rome in a memorial of which Nicole was believed to be the writer, and known to be the translator. Righteous, unqualified, and decisive was the papal condemnation of the morality of the Jesuits; but fatal to the repose of Port-Royal was the triumph of one of her brightest ornaments. The Duchesse de Longueville had lately died, and with her had disappeared the motive which had induced Louis to show some forbearance to the objects of her affectionate solicitude. Harlai now governed the see of Paris. He was a man of disreputable character, and the mere instrument of the king. Louis was in bondage to Madame de Maintenon, and she to the Jesuits. Their vengeance scarcely sought a pretext, and soon found its gratification.

In the exercise of his archiepiscopal authority, Harlai banished De Saci, Tillemont, and Pontchateau, from the valley of Port-Royal. Nicole and Arnauld sought shelter in the Netherlands from his menaces. The postulantes



and scholars were once more expelled, and the admission of novices was again forbidden.

At this epoch, another lady of the house of Arnauld—a cousin and namesake of the Mère Angelique—was invested with the dignity of abbess. Her genius, her virtue, and her learning, are the subject of eulogies too indistinct to be impressive, and too hyperbolical to win implicit credence. Yet, if she was the writer of the memoir in defence of her monastery which bears her name, there was no apparent obstacle, but her sex and her profession, to her successful rivalry of the greatest masters of juridical eloquence in France. Ineffectual, however, would have been all the rhetoric which ever adorned the parliament of Paris, to avert the threatened doom of the stronghold of Jansenism. As he approached the tomb, Harlai's resentment became more deep and settled. He left it a fatal inheritance to his successor, the Cardinal de Noailles. A weak and obstinate, but not unfeeling man, De Noailles owed his promotion to the see of Paris to his fixed hostility to Port-Royal, and his known willingness to hazard the odium of subverting that ancient seat of piety and learning. The apology soon presented itself.

Several years had elapsed since the dispute about "*Le Droit et le Fait de Jansenius*" had apparently reached its close. Revolving this passage of by-gone history, a priest had improved or amused his leisure, by drawing up, for the decision of the Sorbonne, "a case of conscience," which, it must be owned, was a hard problem for the most expert casuist. Of two infallible Popes, one had with his dying breath affirmed, as a momentous truth, a proposition, which the other had abandoned, if not retracted. What was it the duty of the faithful to believe on the subject? Forty doctors answered, that it was enough to maintain a respectful silence as to the "*fait de Jansenius*." Archiepiscopal mandaments, treatises of the learned, royal orders in council, and parliamentary arrêts, flew thick and fast through the troubled air, and obscured the daylight of common sense. Again the eldest son of the church invoked the authority of her spiritual father.

In oracular darkness went forth from the Vatican, the sentence, that "respectful silence is not a sufficient deference for apostolical constitutions." This is what is called, in ecclesiastical story, the bull "*Vineam Domini Sabaoth*."

Under shelter of an abstract theorem which no Catholic could deny, it ingeniously concealed the conflict of opinion of two infallible Pontiffs. Subscription of their unqualified assent to the bull "Vineam" was demanded from the nuns of Port-Royal, and from them alone. They cheerfully subscribed; but with the addition, that their signature was not to be understood as derogating from what had been determined on the pacification of Clement IX. This was their final and their fatal act of contumacy. Decree after decree was fulminated by De Noailles. He forbade the admission of any new members of their house. He prohibited the election of an abbess. He despoiled them of a large part of their estates. He interdicted to them all the sacraments of the church. He obtained a papal bull for the suppression of their monastery; and, in October, 1709, he carried it into effect by an armed force, under the Marquis D'Argenson.

There is in Westminster Hall a tradition that an eminent advocate of our own times, addressed to the House of Peers during sixteen successive days a speech, in the course of which (such is the calculation) he employed all the words in Johnson's Dictionary, one with another, just thirty-five times over. Neither boasting the copiousness, nor presuming on the patience which were at the command of that great lawyer, we have compressed into a few sentences the history of a contest, which, if not so abridged, would have swollen to the utmost limits of that unparalleled oration. But to those who have leisure for such studies, and who delight in a well-fought forensic field, we can promise that pleasure in the highest degree from a perusal of the contest between the aged ladies of Port-Royal, and their royal, mitred, and ermined antagonists. Never was a more gallant struggle against injustice. After exhausting all the resources of legal defence, those helpless and apparently feeble women disputed every inch of ground by protests, remonstrances, and petitions, which, for the moment at least, held their assailants in check, and which yet remain a wondrous monument of their perseverance and capacity, and of the absolute self-control which, amidst the outpourings of their griefs, and the exposure of their wrongs, restrained every expression of asperity or resentment. Never was the genius of the family of Arnauld exhibited with greater lustre, and never with less effect.

In a gray autumnal morning, a long file of armed horsemen, under the command of D'Argenson, was seen to issue from the woods which overhung the ill-fated monastery. In the name of Louis he demanded and obtained admission into that sacred enclosure. Seated on the abbatial throne, he summoned the nuns into his presence. They appeared before him veiled, silent, and submissive. Their papers, their title-deeds, and their property were then seized, and proclamation made of a royal decree which directed their immediate exile. It was instantly carried into effect. Far and wide, along the summits of the neighbouring hills, might be seen a thronging multitude of the peasants whom they had instructed, and of the poor whom they had relieved. Bitter cries of indignation and of grief, joined with fervent prayers, arose from these helpless people, as, one after another, the nuns entered the carriages drawn up for their reception. Each pursued her solitary journey to the prison destined for her. Of these venerable women, some had passed their eightieth year, and the youngest was far advanced in life. Labouring under paralysis and other infirmities of old age, several of them reached at once their prisons and their graves. Others died under the distress and fatigues of their journey. Some possessed energies which no sufferings could subdue. Madame de Remicourt, for example, was kept for two years in solitary confinement; in a cell lighted and ventilated only through the chimney; without fire, society, or books. "You may persecute, but you will never change Madame de Remicourt," said the archbishop; "for" (such was his profound view of the phenomenon) "she has a square head, and people with square heads are always obstinate." Last in the number of exiles appeared at the gates of the abbey, the prioress, Louise de St. Anastasie Mesnil de Courtiaux. She had seen her aged sisters one by one quit for ever the abode, the associates, and the employments of their lives. To each she had given her parting benediction. She shed no tear, she breathed no murmur, nor for a moment betrayed the dignity of her office, or the constancy of her mind. "Be faithful to the end," were the last words which she addressed to the last companion of her sorrows. And nobly did she fulfil her own counsels. She was conducted to a convent, where, under a close guard, she was compelled to endure the utmost rigours of a jail. Deprived of

all those religious comforts which it is in the power of man to minister, she enjoyed a solace, and found a strength, which it was not in the power of man to take away. In common with the greater part of her fellow-sufferers, she died with no priestly absolution, and was consigned to an unhallowed grave. They died the martyrs of sincerity; strong in the faith that a lie must ever be hateful in the sight of God, though infallible popes should exact it, or an infallible church, as represented by cardinals and confessors, should persuade it.

Unsatiated by the calamities of the nuns, the vengeance of the enemies of Port-Royal was directed against the buildings where they had dwelt, the sacred edifice where they had worshipped, and the tombs in which their dead had been interred. The monastery and the adjacent church were overthrown from their foundations. Workmen, prepared by hard drinking for their task, broke open the graves in which the nuns and recluses of former times had been interred. With obscene ribaldry, and outrages too disgusting to be detailed, they piled up a loathsome heap of bones and corpses, on which the dogs were permitted to feed. What remained was thrown into a pit, prepared for the purpose, near the neighbouring church-yard of St. Lambert.

A wooden cross, erected by the villagers, marked the spot where many a pilgrim resorted to pray for the souls of the departed, and for his own. At length no trace remained of the fortress of Jansenism to offend the eye of the Jesuits, or to perpetuate the memory of the illustrious dead with whom they had so long contended. The solitary Gothic arch, the water-mill, and the dovecot, rising from the banks of the pool, with the decayed towers and the farm-house on the slopes of the valley, are all that now attest that it was once the crowded abode of the wise, the learned, and the good. In that spot, however, may still be seen the winding brook, the verdant hills, and the quiet meadows, nature's indestructible monuments to the devout men and holy women who nurtured there affections which made them lovely in their lives, and hopes which rendered them triumphant in death. Nor in her long roll of martyrs has history to record the names of any who suffered with greater constancy, or in a nobler cause; for their conflict was with the very church they most profoundly revered, and their cause was that of devotedness to sincerity and the abhorrence of falsehood.



Amongst the interpreters of the counsels of Divine Providence in that age, there were not wanting many who found, in the calamities which overwhelmed the declining years of Louis, the retribution of an avenging Deity for the wrongs inflicted on Port-Royal. If it were given to man to decipher the mysterious characters engraven on the scroll of this world's history, it might not be difficult to find, in the annals of his reign, other and yet more weighty reasons for the awakening of Nemesis in France at the commencement of the eighteenth century. But of the mere chronological fact, there is no doubt. The deaths of the three Dauphins, and the victories of Eugene and Marlborough, followed hard on the dispersion of the nuns. With his dying breath, Louis cast the responsibility on the Jesuits who stood round his bed. "If, indeed, you have misled and deceived me"—such was his last address to his confessors—"you are deeply guilty, for in truth I acted in good faith. I sincerely sought the peace of the church." The humiliation of his spiritual advisers quickly followed. It was preceded by the retirement and death of Madame de Maintenon, who had both provoked and derided the sufferings of the Port-Royalists. The very type of mediocrity out of place, she is to our mind the least winning of all the ladies of equivocal or desperate reputation who in modern times have stood on the steps of European thrones. Her power was sustained by the feebleness of the mind she had subdued, and by the craftiness of those who had subjugated her own. Her prudery and her religiousness, such as it was, served but to deepen the aversion which her intriguing, selfish, narrow-minded, and bigoted spirit excite and justify; although, in her own view of the matter, she probably hoped to propitiate the favour of Heaven and the applause of the world, by directing against the unoffending women of Port-Royal the deadly wrath of the worn-out debauchee, whose jaded spirits and unquiet conscience it was her daily task to sustain and flatter. De Noailles, the instrument of her cruelty, lived to bewail his guilt with such strange agonies of remorse as to rescue his memory from all feelings of hatred, although it is difficult to contemplate without some failure of respect, the exhibition of emotions, which, however just in themselves, deprived their victim of all powers of self-control, and of every semblance of decorous composure. His howlings are described by the witness of them,



to have been more like those of a wild beast or a maniac, than of a reasonable man.

If these slight notices of the heroes and heroines of Port-Royal, (slight indeed, when compared with the original materials from which they have been drawn,) should be ascribed by any one to a pen plighted to do suit and service to the cause of Rome, no surmise could be wider of the mark. No Protestant can read the writings of the Port-Royalists themselves, without gratitude for his deliverance from the superstitions of a church which calls herself Catholic, and boasts that she is eternal. That the Church of Rome may flourish as long as the race of man shall endure, is indeed a conclusion which may reasonably be adopted by him who divines the future only from the past. For where is the land, or what the historical period, in which a conspicuous place has not been held by phenomena essentially the same, however circumstantially different? In what age has man not been a worshipper of the visible? In what country has imagination—the sensuous property of the mind—failed to triumph over those mental powers which are purely contemplative? Who can discover a period in which religion has not more or less assumed the form of a compromise between the self-dependence and the self-distrust of her votaries—between their abasement to human authority and their conviction of its worthlessness—between their awe of the divine power and their habitual revolt against the divine will? Of every such compromise, the indications have ever been the same—a worshipper of pomp and ceremonial, a spiritual despotism exercised by a sacerdotal caste, bodily penances and costly expiations, and the constant intervention of man, and of the works of man, between the worshipper and the supreme object of his worship. So long as human nature shall continue what it is, the religion of human nature will be unchanged. The Church of Rome will be eternal, if man, such as he now is, is himself eternal.

But for every labour under the sun, says the Wise Man, there is a time. There is a time for bearing testimony against the errors of Rome, why not also a time for testifying to the sublime virtues with which those errors have been so often associated? Are we for ever to admit and never to practise the duties of kindness and mutual forbearance? Does Christianity consist in a vivid perception of

the faults, and an obtuse blindness to the merits of those who differ from us? Is charity a virtue only when we ourselves are the objects of it? Is there not a church as pure and more catholic than those of Oxford or Rome—a church comprehending within its limits every human being who, according to the measure of the knowledge placed within his reach, strives habitually to be conformed to the will of the common Father of us all? To indulge hope beyond the pale of some narrow communion, has, by each Christian society in its turn, been denounced as a daring presumption. Yet hope has come to all, and with her faith and charity, her inseparable companions. Amidst the shock of contending creeds, and the uproar of anathemas, they who have ears to hear, and hearts to understand, have listened to gentler and more kindly sounds. Good men may debate as polemics, but they will feel as Christians. On the universal mind of Christendom is indelibly engraven one image, towards which the eyes of all are more or less earnestly directed. Whoever has himself caught any resemblance, however faint and imperfect, to that divine and benignant Original, has in his measure learned to recognise a brother wherever he can discern the same resemblance.\*

There is an essential unity in that kingdom which is not of this world. But within the provinces of that mighty state there is room for endless varieties of administration, and for local laws and customs widely differing from each other. The unity consists in the one object of worship—the one object of affiance—the one source of virtue—the one cementing principle of mutual love, which pervade and animate the whole. The diversities are, and must be, as numerous and intractable as are the essential distinctions which nature, habit and circumstances have created amongst men. Uniformity of creeds, of discipline, of ritual, and of ceremonies, in such a world as ours!—a world where no two men are not as distinguishable in their mental as in their physical aspect; where every petty community has

\* See on this subject a book entitled "Catholic Christianity," the anonymous work of the Rev. E. M'Vicar, now a minister of the Church of Scotland in Ceylon. Why such a book should not have attained an extensive celebrity, or why such a writer should have been permitted to quit his native land, are questions to which we fear no satisfactory answer could be given by the dispensers of fame or of church preferment.

its separate system of civil government; where all that meets the eye, and all that arrests the ear, has the stamp of boundless and infinite variety! What are the harmonies of tone, of colour, and of form, but the result of contrasts—of contrasts held in subordination to one pervading principle, which reconciles without confounding the component elements of the music, the painting, or the structure? In the physical works of God, beauty could have no existence without endless diversities. Why assume that in religious society—a work not less surely to be ascribed to the supreme author of all things—this law is absolutely reversed? Were it possible to subdue that innate tendency of the human mind, which compels men to differ in religious opinions and observances, at least as widely as on all other subjects, what would be the results of such a triumph? Where would then be the free comparison, and the continual enlargement of thought; where the self-distrusts which are the springs of humility, or the mutual dependencies which are the bonds of love? He who made us with this infinite variety in our intellectual and physical constitution, must have foreseen, and foreseeing, must have intended, a corresponding dissimilarity in the opinions of his creatures on all questions submitted to their judgment, and proposed for their acceptance. For truth is his law; and if all will profess to think alike, all must live in the habitual violation of it.

Zeal for uniformity attests the latent distrusting, not the firm convictions of the zealot. In proportion to the strength of our self-reliance, is our indifference to the multiplication of suffrages in favour of our own judgment. Our minds are steeped in imagery; and where the visible form is not, the impalpable spirit escapes the notice of the unreflecting multitude. In common hands, analysis stops at the species or the genus, and cannot rise to the order or the class. To distinguish birds from fishes, beasts from insects, limits the efforts of the vulgar observer of the face of nature. But Cuvier could trace the sublime unity, the universal type, the fountal Idea existing in the creative intelligence, which connects as one the mammoth and the snail. So, common observers can distinguish from each other the different varieties of religious society, and can rise no higher. Where one assembly worships with harmonies of music, fumes of incense, ancient liturgies, and a gorgeous ceremonial, and

another listens to the unaided voice of a single pastor, they can perceive and record the differences; but the hidden ties which unite them both escape such observation. All appears as contrast, and all ministers to antipathy and discord. It is our belief that these things may be rightly viewed in a different aspect, and yet with the most severe conformity to the divine will, whether as intimated by natural religion, or as revealed in holy scripture. We believe that, in the judgment of an enlightened charity, many Christian societies, who are accustomed to denounce each other's errors, will at length come to be regarded as members in common of the one great and comprehensive church, in which diversities of forms are harmonized by an all-pervading unity of spirit. For ourselves, at least, we should deeply regret to conclude that we were aliens from that great Christian Commonwealth of which the Nuns and Recluses of the valley of Port-Royal were members, and members assuredly of no common excellence.

## IGNATIUS LOYOLA AND HIS ASSOCIATES.\*

(Edinburgh Review, 1842.)

ON the dawn of the day which, in the year 1534, the Church of Rome celebrated the feast of the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady, a little company of men, whose vestments bespoke their religious character, emerged in solemn procession from the deep shadows cast by the towers of Notre Dame over the silent city below them. In a silence not less profound, except when broken by the chant of the matins appropriate to that sacred season, they climbed the Hill of Martyrs, and descended into the Crypt, which then ascertained the spot where the Apostle of France had won the crown of martyrdom. With a stately though halting gait, as one accustomed to military command, marched at their head a man of swarthy complexion, bald-headed and of middle stature, who had passed the meridian of life; his deep-set eyes glowing as with a perennial fire, from beneath brows, which, had phrenology then been born, she might have portrayed in her loftiest style, but which, without her aid, announced a commission from on high to subjugate and to rule mankind. So majestic, indeed, was the aspect of Ignatius Loyola, that, during the sixteenth century few, if any of the books of his order appeared without the impress of that imperial countenance. Beside him in the chapel of St. Denys knelt another worshipper, whose manly bearing, buoyant step, clear blue eye, and finely-chiseled features, contrasted strangely with the solemnities in which he was engaged. Then in early manhood, Francis Xavier united in his person the dignity befitting his

\* *Exercitia Spiritualia S. P. Ignatii Loyolæ, cum Versione literali ex Autographo Hispanico Præmittuntur R. P. JOANNIS ROTHMEN, Præpositi Generalis Societatis Jesu, Literæ Encycliæ ad Patres et Fratres ejusdem Societatis, de Spiritualium Exercitiorum S. P. N. Studio et Usu. Londini, typis C. Richards. 1837.*



birth as a grandee of Spain, and the grace which should adorn a page of the Queen of Castile and Arragon. Not less incongruous with the scene in which they bore their parts, were the slight forms of the boy Alphonso Salmeron and of his bosom friend Jago Laynez, the destined successor of Ignatius in his spiritual dynasty. With them Nicholas Alphonso Bobadilla, and Simon Rodriguez—the first a teacher, the second a student of philosophy—prostrated themselves before the altar, where ministered Peter Faber, once a shepherd in the mountains of Savoy, but now a priest in holy orders. By his hands was distributed to his associates the seeming bread, over which he had uttered words of more than miraculous efficacy; and then were lifted up their united voices, uttering, in low but distinct articulation, an oath, at the deep significance of which the nations might have trembled or rejoiced. Never did human lips pronounce a vow more religiously observed, or pregnant with results more momentous.

Descended from an illustrious family, Ignatius had in his youth been a courtier and a cavalier, and if not a poet at least a cultivator of poetry. At the siege of Pampeluna his leg was broken, and, after the failure of mere vulgar leeches, was set by a touch from the hand of the Prince of Apostles. Yet St. Peter's therapeutic skill was less perfect than might have been expected from so exalted a surgeon; for a splinter still protruded through the skin, and the limb was shrunk and shortened. To regain his fair proportions, Ignatius had himself literally stretched on the rack; and expiated, by a long confinement to his couch, this singular experiment to reduce his refractory bones and sinews. Books of knight-errantry relieved the lassitude of sickness, and, when these were exhausted, he betook himself to a series of still more marvellous romances. In the legends of the Saints the disabled soldier discovered a new field of emulation and of glory. Compared with their self-conquests and their high rewards, the achievements and the renown of Roland and of Amadis waxed dim. Compared with the peerless damsels for whose smiles Paladins had fought and died, how transcendently glorious the image of feminine loveliness and angelic purity which had irradiated the hermit's cell and the path of the wayworn pilgrims! Far as the heavens are above the earth would be the plighted fealty of the knight of the Virgin Mother beyond the no-

blest devotion of mere human chivalry. In her service he would cast his shield over the church which ascribed to her more than celestial dignities; and bathe in the blood of her enemies the sword once desecrated to the mean ends of worldly ambition. Nor were these vows unheeded by her to whom they were addressed. Environed in light, and clasping her infant to her bosom, she revealed herself to the adoring gaze of her champion. At that heavenly vision, all fantasies of worldly and sensual delight, like exorcised demons, fled from his soul into an eternal exile. He rose, suspended at her shrine his secular weapons, performed there his nocturnal vigils, and with returning day retired to consecrate his future life to the glory of the *Virgo Deipara*.

To these erotic dreams succeeded stern realities; convulsive agonies of prayer, wailings of remorse, and self-inflicted bodily torments. Exchanging dresses with a beggar, he lined his gaberdine with prickly thorns, fasted to the verge of starvation, assumed the demeanour of an idiot, became too loathsome for human contact, and then, plunging into a gloomy cavern, surrendered himself up to such wrestlings with the Evil Spirit, and to such vicissitudes of rapture and despair, that in the storm of turbid passions his reason had nearly given way. Friendly hands dragged him from his hiding-place; and hands, in intention at least, not less friendly, recorded his feverish ravings. At one time he conversed with voices audible to no ear but his; at another, he sought to propitiate Him before whom he trembled, by expiations which would have been more fitly offered to Moloch. Spiritual Doctors ministered to his relief, but they prescribed in vain. Too simple for their subtilized perception was the simple truth, that in revealing himself to mankind in the character of a Father, that awful Being has claimed as peculiarly his own the gentlest, the kindest, and the most confiding affections of our nature.

At the verge of madness Ignatius paused. That noble intellect was not to be whelmed beneath the tempests in which so many have sunk, nor was his deliverance to be accomplished by any vulgar methods. Standing on the steps of a Dominican church he recited the office of Our Lady, when suddenly heaven itself was laid open to the eye of the worshipper. That ineffable mystery, which the author of the Athanasian creed has laboured to enunciate in

words, was disclosed to him as an object not of faith but of actual sight. The past ages of the world were rolled back in his presence, and he beheld the material fabric of things rising into being, and perceived the motives which had prompted the exercise of the creative energy. To his spiritualized sense was disclosed the actual process by which the Host is transubstantiated; and the other Christian verities which it is permitted to common men to receive but as exercises of their belief, now became to him the objects of immediate inspection and of direct consciousness. For eight successive days his body reposed in an unbroken trance; while his spirit thus imbibed disclosures for which the tongues of men have no appropriate language. In a volume of fourscore leaves he attempted indeed to impart them; but, dark with excess of light, his words held the learned and the ignorant alike in speechless wonder.

Ignatius returned to this sublunary scene with a mission not unmeet for an envoy from the empyrean world, of which he had thus become a temporary denizen. He returned to establish on earth a theocracy, of which he should himself be the first administrator, and to which every tribe and kindred of men should be subject. He returned no longer a sordid half-distracted anchorite, but, strange to tell, a man distinguished not more by the gigantic magnitude of his designs, than by the clear good sense, the profound sagacity, the calm perseverance, and the flexible address with which he was to pursue them. History affords no more perfect illustration how readily delirious enthusiasm and the shrewdness of the exchange may combine and harmonize in minds of the heroic order. A Swedenborg-Franklin, reconciling in himself these antagonist propensities, is no monster of the fancy.

On his restoration to human society, Ignatius reappeared in the garb, and addressed himself to the occupations of other religious men. The first fruits of his labours was the book of which we have transcribed the title-page. It was originally written in Spanish, and appeared in an inaccurate Latin version. By the order of the present Pope, Loyola's manuscript, still remaining in the Vatican, has been again translated. In this new form the book is commended to the devout study of the faithful by a bull of Pope Paul III., and by an Encyclical Epistle from the present General of the order of Jesus. To so august a

sanction, slight indeed is the aid which can be given by the suffrage of northern heretics. Yet on this subject the chair of Knox, if now filled by himself, would not be very widely at variance with the throne of St. Peter. The "Spiritual Exercises" form a manual of what may be called "the act of conversion." It proposes a scheme of self-discipline by which, in the course of four weeks, that mighty work is to be accomplished. In the first, the penitent is conducted through a series of dark retrospects to abase, and of gloomy prospects to alarm him. These ends obtained, he is during the next seven days to enrol himself—such is the military style of the book—in the army of the faithful, studying the sacred biography of the Divine Leader of that elect host, and choosing with extreme caution the plan of life, religious or secular, in which he may be best able to tread in his steps, and to bear the standard emblematic at once of suffering and of conquest. To sustain the soldier of the cross in this protracted warfare, his spiritual eye is, during the third of his solitary weeks, to be fixed in a reverential scrutiny into that unfathomable abyss of woe, into which a descent was once made to rescue the race of Adam from the grasp of their mortal enemies; and then seven suns are to rise and set while the still secluded but now disenthralled spirit is to chant triumphant hallelujahs, elevating her desires heavenward, contemplating glories hitherto unimaginable, and mysteries never before revealed; till the sacred exercises close with an absolute surrender of all the joys and interests of this sublunary state, as a holocaust, to be consumed by the undying flame of divine love on the altar of the regenerate heart.

He must have been deeply read in the nature of man, who should have predicted such first fruits as these from the restored health of the distracted visionary, who had alternately sounded the base strings of humility on earth, and the living chords which vibrate with spontaneous harmonies along the seventh heavens. A closer survey of the book will but enhance the wonder. To transmute profligates into converts, by a process of which, during any one of her revolutions round our planet, the moon is to witness the commencement and the close, might perhaps seem like a plagiarism from the academies of Laputa. But in his great, and indeed his only extant work, Ignatius Loyola is no dreamer. By force of an instinct with which such minds as

his alone are gifted, he could assume the character to which the shrewd, the practical, and the worldly-wise aspire, even when abandoning himself to ecstasies which they are alike unable to comprehend or to endure. His mind resembled the body of his great disciple, Francis Xavier, which, as he preached or baptized, rose majestically towards the skies, while his feet (the pious curiosity of his hearers ascertained the fact,) retained their firm hold on the earth below. If the spiritual exercises were designed to excite, they were not less intended to control and to regulate, religious sensibilities. To exalt the spirit above terrestrial objects was scarcely more his aim, than to disenchant mankind of the self-deceits by which that exaltation is usually attempted. The book, it is true, indicates a tone of feeling utterly removed from that which animates the gay and the busy scenes of life; but it could not have been written except by one accustomed to observe those scenes with the keenest scrutiny, and to study the actors in them with the most profound discernment. To this commendation must be added the praise (to borrow terms but too familiar) of evangelical orthodoxy. A Protestant synod might indeed have extracted from the pages of Ignatius many propositions to anathematize; but they could also have drawn from them much to confirm the doctrines to which their confessions had given such emphatic prominence. If he yielded to the demigods of Rome what we must regard as an idolatrous homage, it would be mere prejudice to deny that his supreme adoration was reserved for that awful Being to whom alone it was due. If he ascribed to merely ritual expiations a value of which we believe them to be altogether destitute, yet were all his mighty powers held in the most earnest and submissive affiance in the Divine Nature, as revealed under the veil of human infirmity and of more than human suffering. After the lapse of two centuries, Philip Doddridge, than whom no man ever breathed more freely on earth the atmosphere of heaven, produced a work of which the Spiritual Exercises might have afforded the model—so many are still the points of contact between those who, ranging themselves round the great object of Christianity as their common centre, occupy the most opposite positions in that expanded circle.

From the publication of the "Spiritual Exercises" to the Vow of Montmartre, nine years elapsed. They wore



away in pilgrimages, in feats of asceticism, in the working of miracles, and in escapes all but miraculous, from dangers which the martial spirit of the saint, no less than his piety, impelled him to incur. In the caverns of Monreza he had vowed to scale the heights of '*perfection*,' and it therefore behooved him thus to climb that obstinate eminence, in the path already trodden by all the canonized and beatified heroes of the church. But he had also vowed to conduct his fellow-pilgrims from the city of destruction to the land of Beulah. In prison and in shipwreck, fainting with hunger or wasted with disease, his inflexible spirit still brooded over that bright, though as yet shapeless vision; until at length it assumed a coherent form as he knelt on the Mount of Olives, and traced the last indelible foot-print of the ascending Redeemer of mankind. At that hallowed spot had ended the weary way of Him who had bowed the heavens, and came down to execute on earth a mission of unutterable love and matchless self-denial; and there was revealed to the prophetic gaze of the future founder of the order of Jesus, (no seer-like genius kindled by high resolves,) the long line of missionaries who, animated by his example and guided by his instructions, should proclaim that holy name from the rising to the setting sun. It was indeed a futurity perceptible only to the telescopic eye of faith. At the mature age of thirty, possessing no language but his own, no science but that of the camp, and no literature beyond the biographies of Paladins and of Saints, he became the self-destined teacher of the future teachers of the world. Hoping against hope, he returned to Barcelona, and there, as the class-fellow of little children, commenced the study of the first rudiments of the Latin tongue.

Among the established *facetix* of the stage, are the distractions of dramatic Eloisas under the tutorship of their Abelards, in the attempt to conjugate *Amo*. Few playwrights, probably, have been aware that the jest had its type, if not its origin, in the scholastic experiences of Ignatius Loyola. At the same critical point, and in the same manner, a malignant spirit arrested his advance in the grammar. On each successive inflection of the verb, corresponding elevations heavenwards were excited in his soul by the demon, who, assuming the garb of an angel of light, thus succeeded in disturbing his memory. To baffle his insidious enemy, the harassed scholar implored the peda-

gogue to make liberal use of that discipline of which who can ever forget the efficacy or the pain? The exorcism was complete. *Ama*, in all her affectionate moods, and changeful tenses, became familiar as household words. Thus Thomas à Kempis was made to speak intelligibly. Erasmus also revealed his hidden treasures of learning and wit, though ultimately exiled from the future schools of the Jesuits, for the same offence of having disturbed the thoughts of his devout reader. Energy won her accustomed triumphs, and, in the year 1528, he became a student of the Humanities, and of what was then called Philosophy, at the University of Paris.

Of the seven decades of human life, the brightest and the best, in which other men achieve or contend for distinction, was devoted by Ignatius to the studies preparatory to his great undertaking. Grave professors examined him on their prælections, and, when these were over, he sought the means of subsistence by traversing the Netherlands and England as a beggar. Unheeded and despised as he sat at the feet of the learned, or solicited alms of the rich, he was still maturing in the recesses of his bosom designs more lofty than the highest to which the monarchs of the houses of Valois or of Tudor had ever dared to aspire. In the University of Paris he at length found the means of carrying into effect the cherished purposes of so many years. It was the heroic age of Spain, and the countrymen of Gonsalvo and Cortes lent a willing ear to counsels of daring on any field of adventure, whether secular or spiritual. His companions in study thus became his disciples in religion. Nor were his the common-place methods of making converts. To the contemplative and the timid, he enjoined hardy exercises of active virtue. To the gay and ardent, he appeared in a spirit still more buoyant than their own. To a debauchee, whom nothing else could move, he presented himself neck-deep in a pool of frozen water, to teach the more impressively the duty of subduing the carnal appetites. To an obdurate priest, he made a general confession of his own sins, with such agonies of remorse and shame, as to break up, by force of sympathy, the fountains of penitence in the bosom of the confessor. Nay, he even engaged at billiards with a joyous lover of the game, on condition that the defeated player should serve his antagonist for a month; and the victorious

saint enforced the penalty by consigning his adversary to a month of secluded devotion. Others yielded at once and without a struggle to the united influence of his sanctity and genius; and it is remarkable that, from these more docile converts, he selected, with but two exceptions, the original members of his infant order. Having performed the initiatory rite of the Spiritual Exercises, they all swore on the consecrated Host in the Crypt of St. Denys, to accompany their spiritual father on a mission to Palestine; or, if that should be impracticable, to submit themselves to the vicar of Christ, to be disposed of as missionaries at his pleasure.

Impetuous as had been the temper of Ignatius in early life, he had learned to be patient of the slow growth of great designs. Leaving his disciples to complete their studies at Paris under the care of Peter Faber, he returned to Spain to recruit their number, to mature his plans, and, perhaps, to escape from a too familiar intercourse with his future subjects. In the winter of 1536, they commenced their pilgrimage to the eternal city. Xavier was their leader. Accomplished in all courtly exercises, he prepared for his journey by binding tight cords round his arms and legs, in holy revenge for the pleasure which their graceful agility had once afforded him; and pursued his way with Spartan constancy, till the corroded flesh closed obstinately over the ligatures. Miracle, the prompt handmaid of energies like his, burst the bands which no surgeon could extricate; and her presence was attested by the toils which his loosened limbs immediately endured in the menial service of his fellow travellers. At Venice they rejoined their leader, and there employed themselves in ministering to the patients in the hospitals. Foremost in every act of intrepid self-mortification, Xavier here signalized his zeal by exploits, the mere recital of which would derange the stomachs of ordinary men. While courting all the physical tortures of purgatory, his soul, however, inhaled the anticipated raptures of Paradise. Twice these penances and raptures brought him to the gates of death; and, in his last extremity, he caused himself to be borne to places of public resort, that his ghastly aspect might teach the awful lessons which his tongue was no longer able to pronounce.

Such prodigies, whether enacted by the saints of Rome

or by those of Benares, exhibit a sovereignty of the spiritual over the animal nature, which can hardly be contemplated without some feelings akin to reverence. But, on the whole, the hooked Faqueer spinning round his gibbet is the more respectable suicide of the two; for his homage is, at least, meet for the deity he worships. He whose name had been assumed by Ignatius and his followers, equally victorious over the stoical illusions and the lower affections of our nature, had been accustomed to seek repose among the domestic charities of life, and to accept such blameless solaces as life has to offer to the weary and the heavy-laden; nor could services less in harmony with his serene self-reverence have been presented to him, than the vehement emotions, the squalid filth, and the lacerated frames of the first members of the society of Jesus. Loyola himself tolerated, encouraged, and shared these extravagances. His countenance was as haggard, his flagellations as cruel, and his couch and diet as sordid as the rest. They who will conquer crowns, whether ghostly or secular, must needs tread in slippery places. He saw his comrades faint and die with the extremity of their sufferings, and assuming the character of an inspired prophet, promoted, by predicting, their recovery. One of the gentlest and most patient of them, Rodriguez, flying for relief to a solitary hermitage, found his retreat obstructed by a man of terrible aspect and gigantic stature, armed with a naked sword and breathing menaces. Hosez, another of his associates, happening to die at the moment when Ignatius, prostrate before the altar, was reciting from the *Confiteor* the words, 'et omnibus sanctis,' that countless host was revealed to the eye of the saint; and among them, resplendent in glory, appeared his deceased friend, to sustain and animate the hopes of his surviving brethren. As he journeyed with Laynez, he saw a still more awful vision. It exhibited that Being whom no eye hath seen, and whom no tongue may lightly name, and with him the Eternal Son, bearing a heavy cross, and uttering the welcome assurance, "I will be propitious to you at Rome."

These, however, were but the auxiliary and occasional arts (if so they must be termed) by which the sovereignty of Ignatius was established. It behooved him to acquire the unhesitating submission of noble minds, ignited by a zeal as intense and as enduring as his own; and it was on a far lof-



tier basis than that of bodily penances or ecstatic dreams, that for ten successive years their initiatory discipline had been conducted. Wildly as their leader may have described his survey of the celestial regions, and of their triumphant inmates, he had anxiously weighed the state of the world in which he dwelt, and the nature of his fellow sojourners there. He was intimately aware of the effects on human character of self-acquaintance, of action, and of suffering. He therefore required his disciples to scrutinize the recesses and the workings of their own hearts, till the aching sense found relief rather than excitement, in turning from the wonders and the shame within, to the mysteries and the glories of the world of unembodied spirits. He trained them to ceaseless activity, until the transmutation of means into ends was complete; and efforts, at first the most irksome, had become spontaneous and even grateful exercises. He accustomed them to every form of privation and voluntary pain, until fortitude, matured into habit, had been the source of enjoyments, as real as to the luxurious they are incomprehensible. He rendered them stoics, mystics, enthusiasts, and then combined them all into an institute, than which no human association was ever more emphatically practical, or more to the purpose and the time.

Of all the occupations to which man can devote the earlier years of life, none probably leaves on the character an impress so deep and indelible as the profession of arms. In no other calling are the whole range of our sympathetic affections, whether kindly or the reverse, called into such habitual and active exercise; nor does any other stimulate the mere intellectual powers with a force so irresistible, when once they are effectually aroused from their accustomed torpor. Loyola was a soldier to the last breath he drew, a General whose authority none might question, a comrade on whose cordiality all might rely, sustaining all the dangers and hardships he exacted of his followers, and in his religious campaigns a Strategist of consummate skill and most comprehensive survey. It was his maxim that war ought to be aggressive, and that even an inadequate force might be wisely weakened by detachments on a distant service, if the prospect of success was such, that the vague and perhaps exaggerated rumour of it would strike terror into nearer foes, and animate the hopes of ir-



resolute allies. To conquer Lutheranism, by converting to the faith of Rome the barbarous or half-civilized nations of the earth, was, therefore, among the earliest of his projects; and his searching eye had scanned the spirits of his lieutenants to discover which of them was best adapted for enterprises so replete with difficulty and hazard. It was necessary that he should select men superior, not only to all the allurements of appetite, and the common infirmities of our race, but superior, also, to those temptations to which an inquisitive mind and abilities of a high order expose their possessor. His missionaries must be men prepared to do and to dare, but not much disposed to speculate. They must burn with a zeal which no sufferings or disappointment could extinguish; but must not feel those impulses which might prompt men of large capacity to convert a subordinate into an independent command. Long he weighed, and most sagaciously did he decide this perplexing choice. It fell on many who well fulfilled these conditions, but on none in whom all the requisites for such a service met so marvellously as on him who had borne himself so bravely in the chapel of St. Denys, and with such strange mortifications of the flesh in the pilgrimage to Rome.

It was in the year 1506 that Francis Xavier, the youngest child of a numerous family, was born in the castle of his ancestors in the Pyrenees. Robust and active, of a gay humour and ardent spirit, the young mountaineer listened with a throbbing heart to the military legends of his House, and to the inward voice which spoke of days to come, when his illustrious lineage should derive new splendour from his own achievements. But the hearts of his parents yearned over the son of their old age; and the enthusiasm which would have borne him to the pursuit of glory in the camp, was diverted by their counsels to the less hazardous contest for literary eminence at the university of Paris. From the embrace of Aristotle and his commentators, he would, however, have been prematurely withdrawn by the failure of his resources, (for the Lords of Xavier were not wealthy,) if a domestic prophetess (his elder sister) had not been inspired to reveal his marvellous career and immortal recompense. For a child destined to have altars raised to his name throughout the Catholic Church, and masses chanted in his honour till time should be no longer, every sacrifice was wisely made; and he was thus enabled to

struggle on at the College of St. Barbara, till he had become qualified to earn his own maintenance as a public teacher of Philosophy. His Chair was crowded by the studious, and his society courted by the gay, the noble, and the rich. It was courted, also, by one who stood aloof from the thronging multitude; among them, but not of them. Sordid in dress but of lofty bearing, at once unimpassioned and intensely earnest, abstemious of speech, yet occasionally uttering, in deep and most melodious tones, words of strange significance, Ignatius Loyola was gradually working over the mind of his young companion a spell which no difference of taste, of habits, or of age, was of power to subdue. Potent as it was, the charm was long resisted. Hilarity was the native and indispensable element of Francis Xavier, and in his grave monitor he found an exhaustless topic of mirth and raillery. Armed with satire, which was not always playful, the light heart of youth contended, as best it might, against the solemn impressions which he could neither welcome nor avoid. Whether he partook of the frivolities in which he delighted, or in the disquisitions in which he excelled, or traced the windings of the Seine through the forest which then lined its banks, Ignatius was still at hand to discuss with him the charms of society, of learning, or of nature; but, whatever had been the theme, it was still closed by the same awful inquiry, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The world which Xavier had sought to gain, was indeed already exhibiting to him its accustomed treachery. It had given him amusement and applause; but with his self-government had stolen from him his pupils and his emoluments. Ignatius recruited both. He became the eulogist of the genius and the eloquence of his friend, and, as he presented to him the scholars attracted by these panegyrics, would repeat them in the presence of the delighted teacher; and then, as his kindling eye attested the sense of conscious and acknowledged merit, would check the rising exultation by the ever-recurring question, "What shall it profit?" Improvidence squandered these new resources; but nothing could damp the zeal of Ignatius. There he was again, though himself the poorest of the poor, ministering to the wants of Xavier, from a purse filled by the alms he had solicited; but there again was also the same unvarying demand, urged in the same rich though solemn

cadence, "What shall it profit?" In the unrelaxing grasp of the strong man—at once forgiven and assisted, rebuked and beloved by his stern associate—Xavier gradually yielded to the fascination. He became, like his master, impassive, at least in appearance, to all sublunary pains and pleasures; and having performed the initiatory rite of the Spiritual Exercises, excelled all his brethren of the society of Jesus in the fervour of his devotion and the austerity of his self-discipline.

Whatever might have been his reward in another life, his name would have probably left no trace in this world's records, if John III. of Portugal, resolving to plant the Christian faith on the Indian territories which had become subject to the dominion or influence of his crown, had not petitioned the Pope to select some fit leader in this peaceful crusade. On the advice of Ignatius, the choice of the Holy Father fell on Francis Xavier. A happier selection could not have been made, nor was a summons to toil, to suffering, and to death, ever so joyously received. In the visions of the night he had often groaned under the incumbent weight of a wild Indian, of ebon hue and gigantic stature, seated on his shoulders; and he had often traversed tempestuous seas, enduring shipwreck and famine, persecution and danger, in all their most ghastly forms; and as each peril was encountered, his panting soul had invoked, in still greater abundance, the means of making such glorious sacrifices for the conversion of mankind. When the clearer sense and the approaching accomplishment of these dark intimations were disclosed to him, passionate sobs attested the rapture which his tongue could not speak. Light of heart, and joyful in discourse, he conducted his fellow-pilgrims from Rome to Lisbon, across the Pyrenees. As he descended their southern slopes, there rose to his sight the towers where he had enjoyed the sports of childhood, and woven the day-dreams of youth; where still lived the mother, who for eighteen years had daily watched and blessed him, and the saintly sister whose inspired voice had foretold his high vocation. It was all too high for the momentary intrusion of the holiest of merely human feelings. He was on his way with tidings of mercy to a fallen world, and he had not one hour to waste, nor one parting tear to bestow on those whom he best loved and most revered, and whom, in this life, he could never hope to meet again.

We are not left to conjecture in what light his conduct was regarded. "I care little, most illustrious doctor, for the judgment of men and least of all for their judgment who decide before they hear and before they understand," was his half-sportive, half-indignant answer to the remonstrances of a grave and well beneficed kinsman, (a shrewd, thriving, hospitable, much-respected man, no unlikely candidate for the mitre, and a candidate too, in his own drowsy way, for amaranthine crowns and celestial blessedness,) who very plausibly believed his nephew mad. Mad or sober, he was at least impelled by a force, at the first shock of which the united common sense and respectability of mankind must needs fall to pieces—the force of will concentrated on one great end, and elevated above the misty regions of doubt, into that unclouded atmosphere where, attended by her handmaids, hope and courage, joy and fortitude, Faith converts the future into the present, and casts the brightest hues over objects the most repulsive to human sense, and the most painful to our feeble nature.

As the vessel in which Xavier embarked for India fell down the Tagus and shook out her reefs to the wind, many an eye was dimmed with unwonted tears; for she bore a regiment of a thousand men to re-enforce the garrison of Goa; nor could the bravest of that gallant host gaze on the receding land without foreboding that he might never see again those dark chestnut forests and rich orange groves, with the peaceful convents and the long-loved homes reposing in their bosom. The countenance of Xavier alone beamed with delight. He knew that he should never tread his native mountains more; but he was not an exile. He was to depend for food and raiment on the bounty of his fellow-passengers; but no thought for the morrow troubled him. He was going to convert nations, of which he knew neither the language nor even the names; but he felt no misgivings. Worn by incessant sea-sickness, with the refuse food of the lowest seamen for his diet, and the cordage of the ship for his couch, he rendered to the diseased services too revolting to be described; and lived among the dying and the profligate the unwearied minister of consolation and of peace. In the midst of that floating throng, he knew how to create for himself a sacred solitude, and how to mix in all their pursuits in the free spirit of a man of the world, a gentleman, and a scholar. With the vice-

roy and his officers he talked, as pleased them best, of war or trade, of politics or navigation; and to restrain the common soldiers from gambling, would invent for their amusement less dangerous pastimes, or even hold the stakes for which they played, that by his presence and his gay discourse he might at least check the excesses which he could not prevent.

Five weary months (weary to all but him) brought the ship to Mozambique, where an endemic fever threatened a premature grave to the apostle of the Indies. But his was not a spirit to be quenched or allayed by the fiercest paroxysms of disease. At each remission of his malady, he crawled to the beds of his fellow-sufferers to soothe their terrors or assuage their pains. To the eye of any casual observer the most wretched of mankind, in the esteem of his companions the happiest and the most holy, he reached Goa just thirteen months after his departure from Lisbon.

At Goa, Xavier was shocked, and had fear been an element in his nature, would have been dismayed, by the almost universal depravity of the inhabitants. It exhibited itself in those offensive forms which characterize the crimes of civilized men when settled among a feebler race, and released from even the conventional decencies of civilization. Swinging in his hand a large bell, he traversed the streets of the city, and implored the astonished crowd to send their children to him, to be instructed in the religion which they still at least professed. Though he had never been addressed by the soul-stirring name of father, he knew that in the hardest and the most dissolute heart which had once felt the parental instinct, there is one chord which can never be wholly out of tune. A crowd of little ones were quickly placed under his charge. He lived among them as the most laborious of teachers, and the gentlest and the gayest of friends; and then returned them to their homes, that by their more hallowed example they might there impart, with all the unconscious eloquence of filial love, the lessons of wisdom and of piety they had been taught. No cry of human misery reached him in vain. He became an inmate of the hospitals, selecting that of the leprous as the object of his peculiar care. Even in the haunts of debauchery, and at the tables of the profligate, he was to be seen an honoured and a welcome guest; delighting that most unmeet audience with the vivacity of his discourse,



and sparing neither pungent jests to render vice ridiculous, nor sportive flatteries to allure the fallen back to the still distasteful paths of soberness and virtue. Strong in purity of purpose, and stronger still in one sacred remembrance, he was content to be called the friend of publicans and sinners. He had in truth long since deserted the standard of prudence, the offspring of forethought, for the banners of wisdom, the child of love, and followed them through perils not to be hazarded under any less triumphant leader.

Rugged were the ways along which he was thus conducted. In those times, as in our own, there was on the Malabar coast a pearl fishery, and then, as now, the pearl-divers formed a separate and a degraded caste. It was not till after a residence of twelve months at Goa, that Xavier heard of these people. He heard that they were ignorant and miserable, and he inquired no farther. On that burning shore his bell once more rang out an invitation of mercy, and again were gathered around him troops of inquisitive and docile children. For fifteen months he lived among these abject fishermen, his only food their rice and water, reposing in their huts, and allowing himself but three hours' sleep in the four-and-twenty. He became at once their physician, the arbiter in their disputes, and their advocate for the remission of their annual tribute with the government of Goa. The bishop of that city had assisted him with two interpreters; but his impassioned spirit struggled, and not in vain, for some more direct intercourse with the objects of his care. Committing to memory translations, at the time unintelligible to himself, of the creeds and other symbols of his faith, he recited them with tones and gestures, which spoke at once to the senses and to the hearts of his disciples. All obstacles yielded to his restless zeal. He soon learned to converse, to preach, and to write in their language. Many an humble cottage was surmounted by a crucifix, the mark of its consecration; and many a rude countenance reflected the sorrows and the hopes which they had been taught to associate with that sacred emblem. "I have nothing to add," (the quotation is from one of the letters which at this time he wrote to Loyola,) "but that they who came forth to labour for the salvation of idolaters, receive from on high such consolations, that if there be on earth such a thing as happiness, it is theirs."

If there be such a thing, it is but as the checkered sunshine of a vernal day. A hostile inroad from Madura overwhelmed the poor fishermen who had learned to call Xavier their father, threw down their simple chapels, and drove them for refuge to the barren rocks and sand-banks which line the western shores of the strait of Manar. But their father was at hand to share their affliction, to procure for them from the viceroy at Goa relief and food, and to direct their confidence to a still more powerful Father, whose presence and goodness they might adore even amidst the wreck of all their earthly treasures.

It was a lesson not unmeet for those on whom such treasures had been bestowed in the most ample abundance; and Xavier advanced to Travancore, to teach it there to the Rajah and his courtiers. No facts resting on remote human testimony can be more exempt from doubt than the general outline of the tale which follows. A solitary, poor, and unprotected stranger, he burst through the barriers which separate men of different tongues and races; and with an ease little less than miraculous, established for himself the means of interchanging thoughts with the people of the east. They may have ill-gathered his meaning, but by some mysterious force of sympathy they soon caught his ardour. Idol temples fell by the hands of their former worshippers. Christian churches rose at his bidding; and the kingdom of Travancore was agitated with new ideas and unwonted controversies. The Brahmins argued—as the Church by law established has not seldom argued—with fire and sword, and the interdict of earth and water to the enemies of their repose. A foreign invader threw a still heavier sword into the trembling scales. From the southward appeared on the borders of Travancore the same force which had swept away the poor fishermen of Malabar. Some embers of Spanish chivalry still glowed in the bosom of Xavier. He flew to the scene of the approaching combat, and there, placing himself in the van of the protecting army, poured forth a passionate prayer to the Lord of Hosts, raised on high his crucifix, and with kindling eyes, and far-resounding voice, delivered the behests of Heaven to the impious invaders. So runs the tale, and ends (it is almost superfluous to add) in the rout of the astounded foe. It is a matter of less animated, and perhaps of more authentic history, that for his services in this

war Xavier was rewarded by the unbounded gratitude of the Rajah, was honoured with the title of his Great Father, and rescued from all farther Brahminical persecution.

Power and courtly influence form an intoxicating draught even when raised to the lips of an ascetic and a saint. Holy as he was, the Great Father of the Rajah of Travancore seems not entirely to have escaped this feverish thirst. Don Alphonso de Souza, a weak though amiable man, was at that time the Viceroy of Portuguese India, and Xavier (such was now his authority) despatched a messenger to Lisbon to demand, rather than to advise his recall. Within the limits of his high commission, (and what subject is wholly foreign to it?) the ambassador of the King of Kings may owe respect, but hardly deference, to any mere earthly monarch. So argued Francis, so judged King John, and so fell Alphonso de Souza, as many a greater statesman has fallen, and may yet fall, under the weight of sacerdotal displeasure. This weakness, however, was not his only recorded fault. Towards the northern extremity of Ceylon lies the island of Manar, a dependency, in Xavier's day, of the adjacent kingdom of Jaffna, where then reigned a sort of oriental Philip II. The islanders had become converts to the Christian faith, and expiated their apostacy by their lives. Six hundred men, women, and children, fell in one royal massacre; and the tragedy was closed by the murder of the eldest son of the King of Jaffna, by his father's orders. Deposition in case of misgovernment, and the transfer to the deposing Power of the dominions of the offender, was no invention of Hastings, or of Clive. It is one of the most ancient constitutional maxims of the European dynasties in India. It may even boast the venerable suffrage of St. Francis Xavier. At his instance, De Souza equipped an armament to hurl the guilty ruler of Jaffna from his throne, and to subjugate his territories to the most faithful King. In the invading fleet the indignant saint led the way, with promises of triumphs, both temporal and eternal. But the expedition failed. Cowardice or treachery defeated the design. De Souza paid the usual penalties of ill success. Xavier sailed away to discover other fields of spiritual warfare.

On the Coromandel coast, near the city of Meliapor, might be seen in those times the oratory and the tomb of St. Thomas, the first teacher of Christianity in India. It

was in a cool and sequestered grotto that the apostle had been wont to pray; and there yet appeared on the living rock, in bold relief, the cross at which he knelt, with a crystal fountain of medicinal waters gushing from the base of it. On the neighbouring height, a church with a marble altar, stained, after the lapse of fifteen centuries, with the blood of the martyr, ascertained the sacred spot at which his bones had been committed to the dust. To this venerable shrine Xavier retired, to learn the will of Heaven concerning him. If we may believe the oath of one of his fellow-pilgrims, he maintained, on this occasion, for seven successive days an unbroken fast and silence—no unfit preparation for his approaching conflicts. Even around the tomb of the apostle malignant demons prowled by night; and, though strong in the guidance of the Virgin, Xavier not only found himself in their obscene grasp, but received from them blows, such as no weapons in human hands could have inflicted, and which had nearly brought to a close his labours and his life. Baffled by a superior power, the fiends opposed a still more subtle hinderance to his designs against their kingdom. In the garb, and in the outward semblance of a band of choristers, they disturbed his devotions by such soul-subduing strains, that the very harmonies of heaven might seem to have been awakened to divert the Christian warrior from his heavenward path. All in vain their fury and their guile. He found the direction he implored, and the first bark which sailed from the Coromandel shore to the city of Malacca, bore the obedient missionary to that great emporium of eastern commerce.

Thirty years before the arrival of Xavier, Malacca had been conquered by Alphonso Albuquerque. It was a place abandoned to every form of sensual and enervating indulgence. Through her crowded streets a strange and solemn visiter passed along, pealing his faithful bell, and earnestly imploring the prayers of the faithful for that guilty people. Curiosity and alarm soon gave way to ridicule; but Xavier's panoply was complete. The messenger of divine wrath judged this an unfit occasion for courting aversion or contempt. He became the gayest of the gay, and, in address at least, the very model of an accomplished cavalier. Foiled at their own weapons, his dissolute countrymen acknowledged the irresistible authority of a self-devotion so awful, relieved and embellished as it was by

every social grace. Thus the work of reformation prospered, or seemed to prosper. Altars rose in the open streets, the confessional was thronged by penitents, translations of devout books were multiplied; and the saint, foremost in every toil, applied himself with all the activity of his spirit to study the structure and the graceful pronunciation of the Malayar tongue. But the plague was not thus to be stayed. A relapse into all their former habits filled up the measure of their crimes. With prophetic voice Xavier announced the impending chastisements of Heaven; and, shaking off from his feet the dust of the obdurate city, pursued his indefatigable way to Amboyna.

That Island, then a part of the vast dominions of Portugal in the east, had scarcely witnessed the commencement of Xavier's exertions, when a fleet of Spanish vessels appeared in hostile array on the shores. They were invaders, and even corsairs; for their expedition had been disavowed by Charles V. Pestilence, however, was raging among them; and Xavier was equally ready to hazard his life in the cause of Portugal, or in the service of her afflicted enemies. Day and night he lived in the infected ships, soothing every spiritual distress, and exerting all the magical influence of his name to procure for the sick whatever might contribute to their recovery or soothe their pains. The coals of fire, thus heaped on the heads of the pirates, melted hearts otherwise steeled to pity; and to Xavier belonged the rare, perhaps the unrivalled, glory of repelling an invasion by no weapons but those of self-denial and love.

But glory, the praise of men or their gratitude, what were these to him? As the Spaniards retired peacefully from Amboyna, he, too, quitted the half-adoring multitude, whom he had rescued from the horrors of a pirates' war, and, spurning all the timid counsel which would have stayed his course, proceeded, as the herald of good tidings, to the half barbarous islands of the neighbouring Archipelago. "If those lands," such was his indignant exclamation, "had scented woods and mines of gold, Christians would find courage to go there; nor would all the perils of the world prevent them. They are dastardly and alarmed, because there is nothing to be gained there but the souls of men, and shall love be less hardy and less generous than avarice? They will destroy me, you say, by poison. It



is an honour to which such a sinner as I am may not aspire; but this I dare to say, that whatever form of torture or of death awaits me, I am ready to suffer it ten thousand times for the salvation of a single soul." Nor was this the language of a man insensible to the sorrows of life, or really unaffected by the dangers he had to incur. "Believe me, my beloved brethren," (we quote from a letter written by him at this time to the Society at Rome,) "it is in general easy to understand the evangelical maxim, that he who will lose his life shall find it. But when the moment of action has come, and when the sacrifice of life for God is to be really made, oh then, clear as at other times the meaning is, it becomes deeply obscure! so dark, indeed, that he alone can comprehend it, to whom, in his mercy, God himself interprets it. Then it is we know how weak and frail we are.

Weak and frail he may have been; but from the days of Paul of Tarsus to our own, the annals of mankind exhibit no other example of a soul borne onward so triumphantly through distress and danger, in all their most appalling aspects. He battled with hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and assassination, and pursued his mission of love, with even increasing ardour, amidst the wildest war of the contending elements. At the island of Moro (one of the group of the Moluccas) he took his stand at the foot of a volcano; and as the pillar of fire threw up its wreaths to heaven, and the earth tottered beneath him, and the firmament was rent by falling rocks and peals of unintermitting thunder, he pointed to the fierce lightnings, and the river of molten lava, and called on the agitated crowd which clung to him for safety, to repent, and to obey the truth; but he also taught them that the sounds which racked their ears were the groans of the infernal world, and the sights which blasted their eyes, an outbreak from the atmosphere of the place of torment. Repairing for the celebration of mass to some edifice which he had consecrated for the purpose, an earthquake shook the building to its base. The terrified worshippers fled; but Xavier, standing in meek composure before the rocking altar, deliberately completed that mysterious sacrifice, with a faith at least in this instance enviable, in the real presence; rejoicing, as he states in his description of the scene, to perceive that the demons of the island thus attested their flight before the archangel's sword,

from the place where they had so long exercised their foul dominion. There is no school-boy of our days who could not teach much, unsuspected by Francis Xavier, of the laws which govern the material and the spiritual worlds; nor have we many doctors who know as much as he did of the nature of Him by whom the worlds of matter and of spirit were created; for he studied in the school of protracted martyrdom and active philanthropy, where are divulged secrets unknown and unimagined by the wisest and the most learned of ordinary men. Imparting every where such knowledge as he possessed, he ranged over no small part of the Indian archipelago, and at length retraced his steps to Malacca, if even yet his exhortations and his prayers might avert her threatened doom.

It appeared to be drawing nigh. Alaradin, a Mohamedan chief of Sumatra, had laid siege to the place at the head of a powerful fleet and army. Ill-provided for defence by land, the Portuguese garrison was still more unprepared for a naval resistance. Seven shattered barks, unfit for service, formed their whole maritime strength. Universal alarm overspread the city, and the governor himself at once partook and heightened the general panic. Already, thoughts of capitulation had become familiar to the besieged, and European chivalry had bowed in abject silence to the insulting taunts and haughty menaces of the Moslem. At this moment, in his slight and weather-beaten pinnacle, the messenger of peace on earth effected an entrance into the beleaguered harbour. But he came with a loud and indignant summons to the war; for Xavier was still a Spanish cavalier, and he "thought it foul scorn" that gentlemen, subjects of the most faithful King, should thus be bearded by barbaric enemies, and the worshippers of Christ defied by the disciples of the Arabian impostor. He assumed the direction of the defence. By his advice the seven dismantled ships were promptly equipped for sea. He assigned to each a commander; and having animated the crews with promises of both temporal and eternal triumphs, despatched them to meet and conquer the hostile fleet. As they sailed from the harbour the admiral's vessel ran aground and instantly became a wreck. Returning hope and exultation as promptly gave way to terror; and Xavier, the idol of the preceding hour, was now the object of popular fury. He alone retained his serenity. He upbraided the cowardice

of the governor, revived the spirits of the troops, and encouraged the multitude with prophecies of success. Again the flotilla sailed, and a sudden tempest drove it to sea. Day after day passed without intelligence of its safety: once more the hearts of the besieged failed them. Rumours of defeat were rife; the Mahomedans had effected a landing within six leagues of the city, and Xavier's name was repeated from mouth to mouth with cries of vengeance. He knelt before the altar, the menacing people scarcely restrained by the sanctity of the place from immolating him there as a victim to his own disastrous counsels. On a sudden his bosom was seen to heave as with some deep emotion; he raised aloft his crucifix, and with a glowing eye, and in tones like one possessed, breathed a short yet passionate prayer for victory. A solemn pause ensued; the dullest eye could see that within that now fainting, pallid, agitated frame, some power more than human was in communion with the weak spirit of man. What might be the ineffable sense thus conveyed from mind to mind, without the aid of symbols or of words! One half hour of deep and agonizing silence held the awe-stricken assembly in breathless expectation—when, bounding on his feet, his countenance radiant with joy, and his voice clear and ringing as with the swelling notes of the trumpet, he exclaimed, “Christ has conquered for us! At this very moment his soldiers are charging our defeated enemies; they have made a great slaughter—we have lost only four of our defenders. On Friday next the intelligence will be here, and we shall then see our fleet again.” The catastrophe of such a tale need not be told. Malacca followed her deliverer, and the troops of the victorious squadron, in solemn procession to the church, where, amidst the roar of cannon, the pealing of anthems, and hymns of adoring gratitude, his inward sense heard and revered that inarticulate voice which still reminded him, that for him the hour of repose and triumph might never come, till he should reach that state where sin would no longer demand his rebuke, nor grief his sympathy. He turned from the half-idolatrous shouts of an admiring people, and retraced his toilsome way to the shores of Coromandel.

He returned to Goa a poor and solitary, but no longer an obscure man. From the Indus to the Yellow Sea, had gone forth a vague and marvellous rumour of him. The

tale bore that a stranger had appeared in the semblance of a way-worn, abject beggar, who, by some magic influence, and for some inscrutable ends, had bowed the nations to his despotic will, while spurning the wealth, the pleasures, and the homage which they offered to their conqueror. Many were the wonders which travellers had to tell of his progress, and without number the ingenious theories afloat for the solution of them. He possessed the gift of ubiquity, could at the same moment speak in twenty different tongues, on as many dissimilar subjects, was impassive to heat, cold, hunger, and fatigue, held hourly intercourse with invisible beings, the guides or ministers of his designs, raised the dead to life, and could float, when it so pleased him, across the boiling ocean on the wings of the typhoon. Among the listeners to these prodigies had been Auger, a native and inhabitant of Japan. His conscience was burdened with the memory of great crimes, and he had sought relief in vain from many an expiatory rite, and from the tumults of dissipation. In search of the peace he could not find at home, he sailed to Malacca, there to consult with the mysterious person of whose *avatur* he had heard. But Xavier was absent, and the victim of remorse was retracing his melancholy voyage to Japan, when a friendly tempest arrested his retreat, and once more brought him to Malacca. He was attended by two servants, and with them, by Xavier's directions, he proceeded to Goa. In these three Japanese, his prophetic eye had at once seen the future instruments of the conversion of their native land; and to that end he instructed them to enter on a systematic course of training in a college, which he had established for such purposes, at the seat of Portuguese empire in the east. At that place Xavier, ere long, rejoined his converts. Such had been their proficiency, that soon after his arrival they were admitted not only into the church by baptism, but into the society of Jesus, by the performance of the spiritual exercises.

The history of Xavier now reaches a not unwelcome pause. He pined for solitude and silence. He had been too long in constant intercourse with man, and found that, however high and holy may be the ends for which social life is cultivated, the habit, if unbroken, will impair that inward sense through which alone the soul can gather any true intimations of her nature and her destiny. He retired



to commune with himself in a seclusion where the works of God alone were to be seen, and where no voices could be heard but those which, in each varying cadence, raise an unconscious anthem of praise and adoration to their Creator. There for awhile reposing from labours such as few or any other of the sons of men have undergone, he consumed days and weeks in meditating prospects beyond the reach of any vision unenlarged by the habitual exercise of beneficence and piety. There, too, it may be, (for man must still be human,) he surrendered himself to dreams as baseless, and to ecstasies as devoid of any real meaning, as those which haunt the cell of the maniac. Peace be to the hallucinations, if such they were, by which the giant refreshed his slumbering powers, and from which he roused himself to a conflict never again to be remitted till his frame, yielding to the ceaseless pressure, should sink into a premature but hallowed grave.

Scarcely four years had elapsed from the first discovery of Japan by the Portuguese, when Xavier, attended by Auger and his two servants, sailed from Goa to convert the islanders to the Christian faith. Much good advice had been, as usual, wasted on him by his friends. To Loyola alone he confided the secret of his confidence. "I cannot express to you" (such are his words) "the joy with which I undertake this long voyage; for it is full of extreme perils, and we consider a fleet sailing to Japan as eminently prosperous in which one ship out of four is saved. Though the risk far exceeds any which I have hitherto encountered, I shall not decline it; for our Lord has imparted to me an interior revelation of the rich harvest which will one day be gathered from the cross when once planted there." Whatever may be the thought of these voices from within, it is at least clear, that nothing magnanimous or sublime has ever yet proceeded from those who have listened only to the voices from without. But, as if resolved to show that a man may at once act on motives incomprehensible to his fellow mortals, and possess the deepest insight into the motives by which they are habitually governed, Xavier left behind him a code of instructions for his brother missionaries, illuminated in almost every page by that profound sagacity which results from the union of extensive knowledge with acute observation, mellowed by the intuitive wisdom of a compassionate and lowly heart. The science



of self-conquest, with a view to conquer the stubborn will of others, the act of winning admission for painful truth, and the duties of fidelity and reverence in the attempt to heal the diseases of the human spirit, were never taught by uninspired man with an eloquence more gentle, or an authority more impressive. A long voyage, pursued through every disaster which the malevolence of man and demons could oppose to his progress, (for he was constrained to sail in a piratical ship, with idols on her deck and whirlwinds in her path,) brought him, in the year 1549, to Japan, there to practise his own lessons, and to give a new example of heroic perseverance.

His arrival had been preceded by what he regarded as fortunate auguries. Certain Portuguese merchants, who had been allowed to reside at the principal seaport, inhabited there a house haunted by spectres. Their presence was usually announced by the din of discordant and agonizing dreams; but when revealed to the eye, presented forms resembling those which may be seen in pictures of the infernal state. Now the merchants, secular men though they were, had exorcised these fiends by carrying the cross in solemn procession through the house; and anxious curiosity pervaded the city for some explanation of the virtue of this new and potent charm. There were also legends current through the country which might be turned to good account. Xaca, the son of Amida, the *Virgo Deipara* of Japan, had passed a life of extreme austerity to expiate the sins of men, and had inculcated a doctrine in which even Christians must recognise a large admixture of sacred truth. Temples in honour of the mother and child overspread the land, and suicidal sacrifices were daily offered in them. The Father of Lies had farther propped up his kingdom in Japan by a profane parody on the institutions of the Catholic church. Under the name of the Saco, there reigned in sacerdotal supremacy a counterpart of the holy father at Rome, who consecrated the Fundi or Bishops of this Japanese hierarchy, and regulated at his infallible will whatever related to the rites and ceremonies of public worship. Subordinate to the Fundi were the Bonzes or Priests in holy orders, who, to complete the resemblance, taught, and at least professed to practise, an ascetic discipline. But here the similitude ceases; for, adds the Chronicle, they were great knaves and sad hypocrites.

With these foundations on which to build, the ideas which Xavier had to introduce into the Japanese mind, might not very widely jar with those by which they were preoccupied. Auger, now called Paul of the Holy Faith, was despatched to his former friend and sovereign, with a picture of the Virgin and the infant Jesus, and the monarch and his courtiers admired, kissed, and worshipped the sacred symbols. Xavier himself (to use his own words) stood by, a mere mute statue; but there was Promethean fire within, and the marble soon found a voice. Of all his philological miracles, this was the most stupendous. He who, in the decline of life, bethinks him of all that he once endured to unlock the sense of *Æschylus*, and is conscious how stammering has been the speech with which, in later days, he has been wont to mutilate the tongues of *Pascal* and of *Tasso*, may think it a fable that in a few brief weeks Xavier could converse and teach intelligibly in the involved and ever-shifting dialects of Japan. Perhaps, had the sceptic ever studied to converse with living men under the impulse of some passion which had absorbed every faculty of his soul, he might relax his incredulity; but, whatever be the solution, the fact is attested on evidence which it would be folly to discredit—that within a very short time Xavier began to open to the Japanese, in their own language and to their perfect understanding, the commission with which he was charged. Such, indeed, was his facility of speech, that he challenged the Bonzes to controversies on all the mysterious points of their and his conflicting creeds. The arbiters of the dispute listened as men are apt to listen to the war of words, and many a long-tailed Japanese head was shaken, as if in the hope that the jumbling thoughts within would find their level by the oft-repeated oscillation. It became necessary to resort to other means of winning their assent; and in exploits of asceticism, Xavier had nothing to fear from the rivalry of Bonzes, of *Fundi*, or of the great *Saco* himself. *Cangoxima* acknowledged, as most other luxurious cities would perhaps acknowledge, that he who had such a mastery of his own appetites and passions, must be animated by some power wholly exempt from that debasing influence. To fortify this salutary though not very sound conclusion, Xavier betook himself, (if we may believe his historian,) to the working of miracles. He compelled the fish to fill the nets of the fishermen, and to

frequent the bay of Cangoxima, though previously indisposed to do so. He cured the leprous, and he raised the dead. Two Bonzes became the first, and indeed the only fruits of his labours. The hearts of their brethren grew harder as the light of truth glowed with increasing but ineffectual brightness around them. The King also withdrew his favour, and Xavier, with two companions, carried the rejected messages of mercy to the neighbouring states of the Japanese empire.

Carrying on his back his only viaticum, the vessels requisite for performing the sacrifice of the mass, he advanced to Firando, at once the seaport and the capital of the kingdom of that name. Some Portuguese ships, riding at anchor there, announced his arrival in all the forms of nautical triumph—flags of every hue floating from the masts, seamen clustering on the yards, cannon roaring from beneath, and trumpets braying from above. Firando was agitated with debate and wonder; all asked, but none could afford, an explanation of the homage rendered by the wealthy traders to the meanest of their countrymen. It was given by the humble pilgrim himself, surrounded in the royal presence by all the pomp which the Europeans could display in his honour. Great was the effect of these auxiliaries to the work of an evangelist; and the modern, like the ancient Apostle, ready to become all things to all men, would no longer decline the abasement of assuming for a moment the world's grandeur, when he found that such puerile acts might allure the children of the world to listen to the voice of wisdom. At Meaco, then the seat of empire in Japan, the discovery might be reduced to practice with still more important success, and thitherwards his steps were promptly directed.

Unfamiliar to the ears of us barbarians of the North-Western Ocean are the very names of the seats of Japanese civilization through which his journey lay. At Amanguchi, the capital of Nagoto, he found the hearts of men hardened by sensuality, and his exhortations to repentance were repaid by showers of stones and insults. "A pleasant sort of Bonze, indeed, who would allow us but one God and one woman!" was the summary remark with which the luxurious Amanguchians disposed of the teacher and his doctrine. They drove him forth half naked, with no provision but a bag of parched rice, and accompanied only by

three of his converts, prepared to share his danger and his reproach.

It was in the depth of winter, dense forests, steep mountains, half-frozen streams, and wastes of untrodden snow, lay in his path to Meaco. An entire month was consumed in traversing the wilderness, and the cruelty and scorn of man not seldom adding bitterness to the rigours of nature. On one occasion the wanderers were overtaken in a thick jungle by a horseman bearing a heavy package. Xavier offered to carry the load, if the rider would requite the service by pointing out his way. The offer was accepted, but hour after hour the horse was urged on at such a pace, and so rapidly sped the panting missionary after him, that his tortured feet and excoriated body sank in seeming death under the protracted effort. In the extremity of his distress no repining word was ever heard to fall from him. He performed this dreadful pilgrimage in silent communion with Him for whom he rejoiced to suffer the loss of all things; or spoke only to sustain the hope and courage of his associates. At length the walls of Meaco were seen, promising a repose not ungrateful even to his adamant frame and fiery spirit. But repose was no more to visit him. He found the city in all the tumult and horrors of a siege. It was impossible to gain attention to his doctrines amidst the din of arms; for even the Saco or Pope of Japan could give heed to none but military topics. Chanting from the Psalmist—When Israel went out of Egypt and the house of Jacob from a strange people, the Saint again plunged into the desert, and retraced his steps to Amanguchi.

Xavier describes the Japanese very much as a Roman might have depicted the Greeks in the age of Augustus, as at once intellectual and sensual voluptuaries; on the best possible terms with themselves, a good-humoured but faithless race, equally acute and frivolous, talkative and disputatious—"Their inquisitiveness," he says, "is incredible, especially in their intercourse with strangers, for whom they have not the slightest respect, but make incessant sport of them." Surrounded at Amanguchi, by a crowd of these babblers, he was plied with innumerable questions about the immortality of the soul, the movements of the planets, eclipses, the rainbow—sin, grace, paradise, and hell. He heard and answered. A single response solved all these



problems. Astronomers, meteorologists, metaphysicians, and divines, all heard the same sound; but to each it came with a different and an appropriate meaning. So wrote from the very spot Father Anthony Quadros four years after the event; and so the fact may be read in the process of Xavier's canonization. Possessed of so admirable a gift, his progress in the conversion of these once contemptuous people is the less surprising. Their city became the principal seat of learning in Japan, and of course, therefore, the great theatre of controversial debate. Of these polemics there remains a record of no doubtful authenticity, from which disputants of higher name than those of Amanguchi might take some useful lessons in the dialectic art. Thrusts, better made or more skilfully parried, are seldom to be witnessed in the schools of Oxford or of Cambridge.

In the midst of controversies with men, Xavier again heard that inward voice to which he never answered but by instant and unhesitating submission. It summoned him to Fucheo, the capital of the kingdom of Bungo; a city near the sea, and having for its port a place called Figer, where a rich Portuguese merchant ship was then lying. At the approach of the Saint (for such he was now universally esteemed) the vessel thundered from all her guns such loud and repeated discharges, that the startled sovereign despatched messengers from Fucheo to ascertain the cause of so universal an uproar. Nothing could exceed the astonishment with which they received the explanation. It was impossible to convey to the monarch's ear so extravagant a tale. A royal salute for the most abject of lazars—for a man, to use their own energetic language—"so abhorred of the earth, that the very vermin which crawled over him loathed their wretched fare." If mortal man ever rose or sunk so far as to discover, without pain, that his person was the object of disgust to others, then is there one form of self-dominion in which Francis Xavier has been surpassed. Yielding with no perceptible reluctance to the arguments of his countrymen, and availing himself of the resources at their command, he advanced to Fucheo, preceded by thirty Portuguese clad in rich stuffs, and embellished with chains of gold and precious stones. "Next came, and next did go," in their gayest apparel, the servants and slaves of the merchants. Then appeared the



apostle of the Indies himself, resplendent in green velvet and golden brocade. Chinese tapestry, and silken flags of every brilliant colour, covered the pinnace and the boats in which they were rowed up to the city, and the oars rose and fell to the sound of trumpets, flutes, and hautboys. As the procession drew near to the royal presence, the commander of the ship marched bareheaded, and carrying a wand as the esquire or major-domo of the Father. Five others of her principal officers, each bearing some costly article, stepped along, as proud to do such service; while he, in honour of whom it was rendered, moved onwards with the majestic gait of some feudal chieftain marshalling his retainers, with a rich umbrella over him. He traversed a double file of six hundred men-at-arms drawn up for his reception, and interchanged complimentary harangues with his royal host, with all the grace and dignity of a man accustomed to shine in courts, and to hold intercourse with Princes.

His Majesty of Bungo seems to have borne some resemblance to our own Henry the Eighth, and to have been meditating a revolt from the Saco and his whole spiritual dynasty. Much he said at the first interview, to which no orthodox Bonze could listen with composure. It drew down even on his royal head the rebuke of the learned Faxiondono. "How," exclaimed that eminent divine, "dare you undertake the decision of any article of faith without having studied at the university of Fianzima, where alone are to be learned the sacred mysteries of the gods! If you are ignorant, consult the doctors appointed to teach you. Here am I, ready to impart to you all necessary instruction. Anticipating the slow lapse of three centuries, the very genius of a university of still higher pretensions than that of Fianzima breathed through the lips of the sage Faxiondono. But the great "Tractarian" of Bungo provoked replies most unlike those by which his modern successors are assailed. Never was King surrounded by a gayer circle than that which then glittered at the court of Fucheo. The more the Bonze lectured on his own sacerdotal authority, the more laughed they. The King himself condescended to aid the general merriment, and congratulated his monitor on the convincing proof he had given of his heavenly mission, by the display of an infernal temper. To Xavier he addressed himself in a far different

spirit. On his head the triple crown might have lighted without allaying the thirst of his soul for the conversion of mankind; and the European pomp with which he was for the moment environed, left him still the same living martyr to the faith it was his one object to diffuse. His rich apparel, and the blandishments of the great, served only to present to him, in a new and still more impressive light, the vanity of all sublunary things. He preached, catechised, and disputed, with an ardour and perseverance which threatened his destruction, and alarmed his affectionate followers. "Care not for me," was his answer to their expostulations; "think of me as a man dead to bodily comforts. My food, my rest, my life, are to rescue, from the granary of Satan, the souls for whom God has sent me hither from the ends of the earth." To such fervour the Bonzes of Fucheo could offer no effectual resistance. One of the most eminent of their number cast away his idols and became a Christian. Five hundred of his disciples immediately followed his example. The King himself, a dissolute unbeliever, was moved so far (and the concessions of the rulers of the earth must be handsomely acknowledged) as to punish the crimes he still practised; and to confess that the very face of the Saint was as a mirror, reflecting by the force of contrast all the hideousness of his own vices. Revolting, indeed, they were, and faithful were the rebukes of the tongue, no less than the countenance of Xavier. A royal convert was about to crown his labours, and the worship of Xaca and Amida seemed waning to its close. It was an occasion which demanded every sacrifice; nor was the demand unanswered.

For thirty years the mysteries of the faith of the Bonzes had been taught in the most celebrated of their colleges, by a Doctor who had fathomed all divine and human lore; and who, except when he came forth to utter the oracular voice of more than earthly wisdom, withdrew from the sight of men into a sacred retirement, there to hold high converse with the immortals. Fucarondono, for so he was called, announced his purpose to visit the city and palace of Fucheo. As when, in the agony of Agamemnon's camp, the son of Thetis at length grasped his massive spear, and the trembling sea-horses resounded at his steps—so advanced to the war of words the great chieftain of Japanese theology, and so rose the cry of anticipated triumph from the rescued

Bonzes. Terror seized the licentious King himself, and all foreboded the overthrow of Xavier and Christianity. "Do you know, or rather, do you remember me?" was the inquiry with which this momentous debate was opened. "I never saw you till now," answered the Saint. "A man who has dealt with me a thousand times, and who pretends never to have seen me, will be no difficult conquest," rejoined the most profound of the Bonzes. "Have you left any of the goods which I bought of you at the port of Frenajona?"—"I was never a merchant," said the missionary, "nor was I ever at Frenajona."—"What a wretched memory!" was the contemptuous reply; "it is precisely five hundred years to-day since you and I met at that celebrated mart, when, by the same token, you sold me a hundred pieces of silk, and an excellent bargain I had of it." From the transmigration of the soul the sage proceeded to unfold the other dark secrets of nature—such as the eternity of matter, the spontaneous self-formation of all organized beings, and the progressive cleansing of the human spirit in the nobler and holier, until they attain to a perfect memory of the past, and are enabled to retrace their wanderings from one body to another through all preceding ages—looking down from the pinnacles of accumulated wisdom on the grovelling multitude, whose recollections are confined within the narrow limits of their latest corporeal existence. That Xavier refuted these perplexing arguments, we are assured by a Portuguese by-stander who witnessed the debate; though unhappily no record of his arguments has come down to us. "I have," says the historian, "neither science nor presumption enough to detail the subtle and solid reasonings by which the Saint destroyed the vain fancies of the Bonze."

Yet the victory was incomplete. Having recruited his shattered forces, and accompanied by no less than three thousand Bonzes, Fucarondono returned to the attack. On his side, Xavier appeared in the field of controversy attended by the Portuguese officers in their richest apparel. They stood uncovered in his presence, and knelt when they addressed him. Their dispute now turned on many a knotty point;—as, for example, Why did Xavier celebrate masses for the dead, and yet condemn the orthodox Japanese custom of giving to the Bonze bills of exchange payable in their favour? So subtle and difficult were their inquiries,

that Xavier and his companion, the reporter of the dispute, were compelled to believe that the spirit of evil had suggested them; and that they were successfully answered is ascribed to the incessant prayers which, during the whole contest, the Christians offered for their champion. Of this second polemical campaign we have a minute and animated account. It may be sufficient to extract the conclusion of the royal Moderator. "For my own part," he said, "as far as I can judge, I think that Father Xavier speaks rationally, and that the rest of you don't know what you are talking about. Men must have clear heads or less violence than you have to understand these difficult questions. If you are deficient in faith, at least employ your reason, which might teach you not to deny truths so evident; and do not bark like so many dogs." So saying, the King of Fungo dissolved the assembly. Royal and judicious as his award appears to have been, our Portuguese chronicler admits that the disputants on either side returned with opinions unchanged; and that, from that day forward, the work of conversion ceased. He applies himself to find a solution of the problem, why men who had been so egregiously refuted should still cling to their errors, and why they should obstinately adhere to practices so irrefragably proved to be alike foolish and criminal. The answer, let us hope, is, that the obstinacy of the people of Fungo was a kind of *lusus naturæ*, a peculiarity exclusively their own; that other religious teachers are more candid than the Bonzes of Japan, and that no Professor of Divinity could elsewhere be found so obstinately wedded to his own doctrines as was the learned Fucarondono.

In such controversies, and in doing the work of an evangelist in every other form, Xavier saw the third year of his residence at Japan gliding away, when tidings of perplexities at the mother church of Goa recalled him thither; across seas so wide and stormy, that even the sacred lust of gold hardly braved them in that infancy of the art of navigation. As his ship drove before the monsoon, dragging after her a smaller bark which she had taken in tow, the connecting ropes were suddenly burst asunder, and in a few minutes the two vessels were no longer in sight. Thrice the sun rose and set on their dark course, the unchained elements roaring as in mad revelry around them, and the ocean seething like a caldron. Xavier's shipmates wept over



the loss of friends and kindred in the foundered bark, and shuddered at their own approaching doom. He also wept; but his were grateful tears. As the screaming whirlwind swept over the abyss, the present deity was revealed to his faithful worshipper, shedding tranquillity, and peace, and joy over the sanctuary of a devout and confiding heart. "Mourn not, my friend," was his gay address to Edward de Gama, as he lamented the loss of his brother in the bark; "before three days, the daughter will have returned to her mother." They were weary and anxious days; but, as the third drew towards a close, a sail appeared in the horizon. Defying the adverse winds, she made straight towards them, and at last dropped alongside, as calmly as the sea-bird ends her flight, and furls her ruffled plumage on the swelling surge. The cry of miracle burst from every lip; and well it might. There was the lost bark, and not the bark only, but Xavier himself on board her! What though he had ridden out the tempest in the larger vessel, the stay of their drooping spirits, he had at the same time been in the smaller ship, performing there also the same charitable office; and yet, when the two hailed and spoke each other, there was but one Francis Xavier, and he composedly standing by the side of Edward de Gama on the deck of the "Holy Cross." Such was the name of the commodore's vessel. For her services on this occasion, she obtained a sacred charter of immunity from risks of every kind; and as long as her timbers continued sound, bounded merrily across seas in which no other craft could have lived.

During this wondrous voyage, her deck had often been paced in deep conference by Xavier and Jago de Pereyra, her commander. Though he pursued the calling of a merchant, he had, says the historian, the heart of a prince. Two great objects expanded the thoughts of Pereyra—the one, the conversion of the Chinese empire; the other, his own appointment as ambassador to the celestial court at Pekin. In our puny days, the dreams of traders in the east are of smuggling opium. But in the sixteenth century, no enterprise appeared to them too splendid to contemplate, or too daring to hazard. Before the "Holy Cross" had reached Goa, Pereyra had pledged his whole fortune, Xavier his influence and his life, to this gigantic adventure. In the spring of the following year, the apostle and the ambassador, (for so far the project had in a few months been ac-



complished,) sailed from Goa in the "Holy Cross," for the then unexplored coasts of China. As they passed Malacca, tidings came to Xavier of the tardy though true fulfilment of one of his predictions. Pestilence, the minister of Divine vengeance, was laying waste that stiff-necked and luxurious people; but the woe he had foretold he was the foremost to alleviate. Heedless of his own safety, he raised the sick in his arms and bore them to the hospitals. He esteemed no time, or place, or office, too sacred to give way to this work of mercy. Ships, colleges, churches, all at his bidding became so many lazarettos. Night and day he lived among the diseased and the dying, or quitted them only to beg food or medicine, from door to door, for their relief. For the moment, even China was forgotten; nor would he advance a step though it were to convert to Christianity a third part of the human race, so long as one victim of the plague demanded his sympathy, or could be directed to an ever-present and still more compassionate Comforter. The career of Xavier (though he knew it not,) was now drawing to a close; and with him the time was ripe for practising those deeper lessons of wisdom which he had imbibed from his long and arduous discipline.

With her cables bent lay the "Holy Cross" in the port of Malacca, ready at length to convey the embassy to China, when a difficulty arose, which not even the prophetic spirit of Xavier had foreseen. Don Alvaro d'Alayde, the governor, a grandee of high rank, regarded the envoy and his commission with an evil eye. To represent the crown of Portugal to the greatest of earthly monarchs was, he thought, an honour more meet for a son of the house of Alayde, than for a man who had risen from the very dregs of the people. The expected emoluments also exceeded the decencies of a cupidity less than noble. He became of opinion that it was not for the advantage of the service of King John III., that the expedition should advance. Pereyra appeared before him in the humble garb of a suitor, with the offer of thirty thousand crowns as a bribe. All who sighed for the conversion, or for the commerce of China, lent the aid of their intercessions. Envoys, saints, and merchants, united their prayers in vain. Brandishing his cane over their heads, Alvaro swore that, so long as he was governor of Malacca and captain-general of the seas of Portugal, the embassy should move no farther. Week after

week was thus consumed, and the season was fast wearing away, when Xavier at length resolved on a measure to be justified even in his eyes only by extreme necessity. A secret of high significance had been buried in his bosom since his departure from Europe. The time for the disclosure of it had come. He produced a Papal Brief, investing him with the dignity and the powers of apostolical nuncio in the east. One more hinderance to the conversion of China, and the church would clothe her neck with thunders. Alvaro was still unmoved; and sentence of excommunication was solemnly pronounced against him and his abettors. Alvaro answered by sequestrating the "Holy Cross" herself. Xavier wrote letters of complaint to the King. Alvaro intercepted them. One appeal was still open to the vicar of Christ. Prostrate before the altar, he invoked the aid of Heaven; and rose with purposes confirmed, and hopes reanimated. In the service of Alvaro, though no longer bearing the embassy to China, the "Holy Cross" was to be despatched to Sancian, an island near the mouth of the Canton river, to which the Portuguese were permitted to resort for trade. Xavier resolved to pursue his voyage so far, and thence proceeded to Macao to preach the gospel there. Imprisonment was sure to follow. But he should have Chinese fellow-prisoners. These at least he might convert; and though his life would pay the forfeit, he should leave behind him in these first Christians a band of missionaries who would propagate through their native land the faith he should only be permitted to plant.

It was a compromise as welcome to Alvaro as to Xavier himself. Again the "Holy Cross" prepared for sea; and the apostle of the Indies, followed by a grateful and admiring people, passed through the gates of Malacca to the beach. Falling on his face to the earth, he poured forth a passionate though silent prayer. His body heaved and shook with the throes of that agonizing hour. What might be the fearful portent none might divine, and none presumed to ask. A contagious terror passed from eye to eye, but every voice was hushed. It was as the calm preceding the first thunder peal which is to rend the firmament. Xavier arose, his countenance no longer beaming with its accustomed grace and tenderness, but glowing with a sacred indignation, like that of Isaiah when breathing forth his inspired menaces against the king of Babylon. Standing on

a rock amidst the waters, he loosed his shoes from off his feet, smote them against each other with vehement action, and then casting them from him, as still tainted with the dust of that devoted city, he leaped barefooted into the bark, which bore him away for ever from a place from which he had so long and vainly laboured to avert her impending doom.

She bore him, as he had projected, to the island of Sancian. It was a mere commercial factory; and the merchants who passed the trading season there, vehemently opposed his design of penetrating farther into China. True he had ventured into the forest, against the tigers which infested it, with no other weapon than a vase of holy water; and the savage beasts, sprinkled with that sacred element, had for ever fled the place: but the mandarins were fiercer still than they, and would avenge the preaching of the saint on the inmates of the factory—though most guiltless of any design but that of adding to their heap of crowns and moidores. Long years had now passed away since the voice of Loyola had been heard on the banks of the Seine urging the solemn inquiry, "What shall it profit." But the words still rung on the ear of Xavier, and were still repeated, though in vain to his worldly associates at Sancian. They sailed away with their cargoes, leaving behind them only the "Holy Cross," in charge of the officers of Alvaro, and depriving Xavier of all means of crossing the channel to Macao. They left him destitute of shelter and of food, but not of hope. He had heard that the King of Siam meditated an embassy to China for the following year; and to Siam he resolved to return in Alvaro's vessel, to join himself, if possible, to the Siamese envoys, and so at length to force his way into the empire.

But his earthly toils and projects were now to cease for ever. The angel of death appeared with a summons, for which, since death first entered our world, no man was ever more triumphantly prepared. It found him on board the vessel on the point of departing for Siam. At his own request he was removed to the shore, that he might meet his end with the greater composure. Stretched on the naked beach, with the cold blasts of a Chinese winter aggravating his pains, he contended alone with the agonies of the fever which wasted his vital power. It was a solitude and an agony for which the happiest of the sons of men

might well have exchanged the dearest society and the purest of the joys of life. It was an agony in which his still uplifted crucifix reminded him of a far more awful wo endured for his deliverance; and a solitude thronged by blessed ministers of peace and consolation, visible in all their bright and lovely aspects to the now unclouded eye of faith; and audible to the dying martyr through the yielding bars of his mortal prison-house, in strains of exulting joy till then unheard and unimagined. Tears burst from his fading eyes, tears of an emotion too big for utterance. In the cold collapse of death his features were for a few brief moments irradiated as with the first beams of approaching glory. He raised himself on his crucifix, and exclaiming, *In te, Domine, speravi—non confundar in æternum!* he bowed his head and died.

Why consume many words in delineating a character which can be disposed of in three? Xavier was a Fanatic, a Papist, and a Jesuit. Comprehensive and incontrovertible as the climax is, it yet does not exhaust the censures to which his name is obnoxious. His understanding, that is, the mere cogitative faculty, was deficient in originality, in clearness, and in force. It is difficult to imagine a religious dogma which he would not have embraced, at the command of his teachers, with the same infantine credulity with which he received the creeds and legends they actually imposed upon him. His faith was not victorious over doubt; for doubt never for one passing moment assailed it. Superstition might boast in him one of the most complete as well as one of the most illustrious of her conquests. She led him through a land peopled with visionary forms, and resounding with ideal voices—a land of prodigies and portents, of ineffable discourse and unearthly melodies. She bade him look on this fair world as on some dungeon unvisited by the breath of heaven; and on the glorious face of nature, and the charms of social life, as so many snares and pitfalls for his feet. At her voice he starved and lacerated his body, and rivalled the meanest lazar in filth and wretchedness. Harder still, she sent him forth to establish among half-civilized tribes a worship which to them must have become idolatrous; and to inculcate a morality in which the holier and more arduous virtues were made to yield precedence to ritual forms and outward ceremonies. And yet, never did the polytheism of ancient or of modern Rome



assign a seat among the demi-gods to a hero of nobler mould, or of more exalted magnanimity, than Francis Xavier.

He lived among men as if to show how little the grandeur of the human soul depends on mere intellectual power. His it was to demonstrate with what vivific rays a heart imbued with the love of God and man may warm and kindle the nations; dense as may be the exhalations through which the giant pursues his course from the one end of heaven to the other. Scholars criticised, wits jested, prudent men admonished, and kings opposed him; but on moved Francis Xavier, borne forward by an impulse which crushed and scattered to the winds all such puny obstacles. In ten short years, a solitary wanderer, destitute of all human aid—as if mercy had lent him wings, and faith an impenetrable armour—he traversed oceans, islands, and continents, through a track equal to more than twice the circumference of our globe; every where preaching, disputing, baptizing, and founding Christian churches. There is at least one well authenticated miracle in Xavier's story. It is, that any mortal man should have sustained such toils as he did; and have sustained them too, not merely with composure, but as if in obedience to some indestructible exigency of his nature. "The Father Master Francis," (the words are those of his associate, Melchior Nunez,) "when labouring for the salvation of idolaters, seemed to act, not by any acquired power, but as by some natural instinct; for he could neither take pleasure nor even exist except in such employments. They were his repose; and when he was leading men to the knowledge and the love of God, however much he exerted himself, he never appeared to be making any effort."

Seven hundred thousand converts (for in these matters Xavier's worshippers are not parsimonious,) are numbered as the fruits of his mission; nor is the extravagance so extreme if the word conversion be understood in the sense in which they used it. Kings, Rajahs, and Princes were always, when possible, the first objects of his care. Some such conquests he certainly made; and as the flocks would often follow their shepherds, and as the gate into the Christian fold was not made very strait, it may have been entered by many thousands and tens of thousands. But if Xavier taught the mighty of the earth, it was for the sake



of the poor and miserable, and with them he chiefly dwelt. He dwelt with them on terms ill enough corresponding with the vulgar notions of a saint. "You, my friends," said he to a band of soldiers who had hidden their cards at his approach, "belong to no religious order, nor can you pass whole days in devotion. Amuse yourselves. To you it is not forbidden, if you neither cheat, quarrel, nor swear when you play." Then good-humouredly sitting down in the midst of them, he challenged one of the party to a game at chess; and was found at the board by Don Diego Noragua, whose curiosity had brought him from far to see so holy a man, and to catch some fragments of that solemn discourse which must ever be flowing from his lips. The grandee would have died in the belief that the saint was a hypocrite, unless by good fortune he had afterwards chanced to break in on his retirement, and to find him there suspended between earth and heaven in a rapture of devotion, with a halo of celestial glory encircling his head.

Of such miraculous visitations, nor indeed of any other of his supernatural performances, will any mention be found in the letters of Xavier. Such at least is the result of a careful examination of a considerable series of them. He was too humble a man to think it probable that he should be the depositary of so divine a gift; and too honest to advance any such claims to the admiration of mankind. Indeed he seems to have been even amused with the facility with which his friends assented to these prodigies. Two of them repeated to him the tale of his having raised a dead child to life, and pressed him to reveal the truth. "What!" he replied, "I raise the dead!" "Can you really believe such a thing of a wretch like me?" Then smiling, he added, "They did indeed place before me a child. They said it was dead, which perhaps was not the case. I told him to get up, and he did so. Do you call that a miracle?" But in this matter Xavier was not allowed to judge for himself. He was a *Thaumaturgus* in his own despite; and this very denial is quoted by his admirers as a proof of his profound humility. Could he by some second sight have read the Bull of his own canonization, he would doubtless, in defiance of his senses, have believed (for belief was always at his command) that the church knew much better than he did; and that he had been reversing the laws of nature without perceiving it; for at the distance of rather more

than a half century from his death, Pope Urban VIII., with the unanimous assent of all the cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops, in sacred conclave assembled, pledged his papal infallibility to the miracles already recorded, and to many more. And who can be so sceptical as to doubt their reality, when he is informed that depositions taken in proof of them were read before that august assembly; and that the apotheosis was opposed there by a learned person, who appeared at their bar in the character and with the title of "the Devil's advocate." A scoffer might indeed suggest that the lawyer betrayed the cause of his client if he really laboured to dispel illusions, and that the Father of Lies may have secretly instructed his counsel to make a sham fight of it, in order that one lie the more might be acted in the form of a new idol worship. Without exploring so dark a question, it may be seriously regretted that such old wives' fables have been permitted to sully the genuine history of many a man of whom the world was not worthy, and of none more than Francis Xavier. They have long obscured his real glory, and degraded him to the low level of a vulgar hero of ecclesiastical romance. Casting away these puerile embellishments, refused the homage due to genius and to learning, and excluded from the number of those who have aided the progress of speculative truth, he emerges from those lower regions, clad with the mild brilliancy, and resplendent in the matchless beauty which belong to the human nature, when ripening fast into a perfect union with the divine. He had attained to that child-like affiance in the Author of his being, which gives an unrestrained play to every blameless impulse, even when that awful presence is the most habitually felt. His was a sanctity which, at fitting seasons, could even disport itself in jests and trifling. No man, however abject his condition, disgusting his maladies, or hateful his crimes, ever turned to Xavier without learning that there was at least one human heart on which he might repose with all the confidence of a brother's love. To his eye the meanest and the lowest reflected the image of Him whom he followed and adored; nor did he suppose that he could ever serve the Saviour of mankind so acceptably as by ministering to their sorrows, and recalling them into the way of peace. It is easy to smile at his visions, to detect his errors, to ridicule the extravagant austerities of his life; and even to

show how much his misguided zeal eventually counteracted his own designs. But with our philosophy, our luxuries, and our wider experience, it is not easy for us to estimate or to comprehend the career of such a man. Between his thoughts and our thoughts there is but little in common. Of our wisdom he knew nothing, and would have despised it if he had. Philanthropy was his passion, reckless daring his delight; and faith glowing in meridian splendour the sunshine in which he walked. He judged or felt (and who shall say that he judged or felt erroneously?) that the church demanded an illustrious sacrifice, and that he was to be the victim; that a voice which had been dumb for fifteen centuries, must at length be raised again, and that to him that voice had been imparted; that a new apostle must go forth to break up the incrustations of man's long-hardened heart, and that to him that apostolate had been committed. So judging, or so feeling, he obeyed the summons of him whom he esteemed Christ's vicar on earth, and the echoes from no sublunary region which that summons seemed to awaken in his bosom. In holding up to reverential admiration such self-sacrifices as his, slight, indeed, is the danger of stimulating enthusiastic imitators. Enthusiasm! our pulpits distil their bland rhetoric against it; but where is it to be found? Do not our share markets, thronged even by the devout, overlay it—and our rich benefices extinguish it—and our pentecosts, in the dazzling month of May, dissipate it—and our stipendiary missions, and our mitres, decked even in heathen lands with jewels and with lordly titles—do they not, as so many lightning conductors, effectually divert it? There is indeed the lackadaisical enthusiasm of devotional experiences, and the sentimental enthusiasm of religious bazars, and the oratorical enthusiasm of charitable platforms—and the tractarian enthusiasm of well-beneficed ascetics; but in what, except the name, do they resemble “the-God-in-us” enthusiasm of Francis Xavier?—of Xavier the magnanimous, the holy, and the gay; the canonized saint, not of Rome only, but of universal Christendom; who, if at this hour there remained not a solitary Christian to claim and to rejoice in his spiritual ancestry, should yet live in hallowed and everlasting remembrance; as the man who has bequeathed to these later ages, at once the clearest proof and the most illustrious example, that even amidst the enervating arts of our modern

civilization, the apostolic energy may still burn with all its primeval ardour in the human soul, when animated and directed by a power more than human.

Xavier died in the year 1552, in the forty-seventh year of his age, and just ten years and a half from his departure from Europe. During his residence in India, he had maintained a frequent correspondence with the General of his order. On either side their letters breathe the tenderness which is an indispensable element of the heroic character—an intense though grave affection, never degenerating into fondness; but chastened, on the side of Xavier by filial reverence, on that of Ignatius by parental authority. It was as a father, or rather as a patriarch, exercising a supreme command over his family, and making laws for their future government, that Ignatius passed the last twenty years of his life. No longer a wanderer, captivating or overawing the minds of men by marvels addressed to their imagination, he dwelt in the ecclesiastical capital of the West, giving form and substance to the visions which had fallen on him at the Mount of Ascension, and had attended him through every succeeding pilgrimage.

It proved, however, no easy task to obtain the requisite Papal sanction for the establishment of his order. In that age the regular clergy had to contend with an almost universal unpopularity. To their old enemies, the bishops and secular priests, were added the wits, the reformers, and the Vatican itself. The Papal court not unreasonably attributed to their misconduct, a large share of the disasters under which the Church of Rome was suffering. On the principle of opposing new defences to new dangers, the Pope had given his confidence and encouragement to the Theatins, and the other isolated preachers who were labouring at once to protect and to purify the fold, by diffusing among them their own deep and genuine spirit of devotion. It seemed bad policy at such a moment to call into existence another religious order, which must be regarded with equal disfavour by these zealous recruits, and by the ancient supporters of the Papacy. Nor did the almost morbid prescience of the Vatican fail to perceive how dangerous a rival, even to the successors of St. Peter, might become the General of a society projected on a plan of such stupendous magnitude.

Three years, therefore, were consumed by Ignatius in



useless solicitations. He sought to propitiate, not mere mortal man only, but the Deity himself, by the most lavish promises; and is recorded to have pledged himself on one day to the performance of three thousand masses, if so his prayer might be granted. Earth and Heaven seemed equally deaf to his offers, when the terrors of Paul III. were effectually awakened by the progress of the Reformers in the very bosom of Italy. Ferrara seemed about to fall as Germany, England, and Switzerland, had fallen; and the Consistory became enlightened to see the divine hand in a scheme which they had till then regarded as the workmanship of man, and as wrought with no superhuman purposes. Anxiously and with undisguised reluctance, though, as the event proved, with admirable foresight, Paul III., on the 27th September 1540, affixed the Papal seal to the Bull "*Regimini*," the Magna Charta of the order of Jesus. It affords full internal evidence of the misgivings with which it was issued. "*Quamvis Evangelio doceamur, et fide orthodoxâ cognoscamus ac firmiter profiteamur, omnes Christi fideles, Romano pontifici tanquam Capiti, ac Jesu Christi Vicario, subesse, ad majorem tamen nostræ societatis humilitatem, ac perfectam unius cujusque mortificationem, et voluntatum nostrarum abnegationem, summo-pere conducere judicavimus, singulos nos, ultra illud commune vinculum, speciali voto adstringi, ita ut quidquid Romani pontifices, pro tempore existentes, jusserint*"—"quantum in nobis fuerit exequi teneamur."

So wrote the Pope in the persons of his new Prætorians; and to elect a General of the band, who should guide them to the performance of this vow, was the first care of Ignatius. Twice the unanimous choice of his companions fell on himself. Twice the honour was refused. At length, yielding to the absolute commands of his confessor, he ascended the throne of which he had been so long laying the foundations. Once seated there, his coyness was at an end, and he wielded the sceptre as best becomes an absolute monarch—magnanimously, and with unfaltering decision; beloved, but permitting no rude familiarity; revered, but exciting no servile fear; declining no enterprise which high daring might accomplish, and attempting none which headlong ambition might suggest; self-multiplied in the ministers of his will; yielding to them a large and generous confidence, yet trusting no man whom he had



not deeply studied; and assigning to none a province beyond the range of his capacity.

Though not in books, yet in the far nobler school of active, and especially of military life, Loyola had learned the great secret of government; at least of his government.

It was, that the social affections, if concentrated within a well-defined circle, possess an intensity and endurance, unrivalled by those passions of which self is the immediate object. He had the sagacity to perceive, that emotions like those with which a Spartan or a Jew had yearned over the land and the institutions of their fathers—emotions stronger than appetite, vanity, ambition, avarice, or death itself—might be kindled in the members of his order; if he could detect and grasp those mainsprings of human action of which the Greek and the Hebrew legislators had obtained the mastery. Nor did he seek them in vain.

It is with an audacity approaching to the sublime that Loyola demands the obedience of his subjects—an obedience to be yielded, not in the mere outward act, but by the understanding and the will. “Non intueamini in persona superioris hominem obnoxium erroribus atque miseriis, sed Christum ipsum.” “Superioris vocem ac jussa non secus ac *Christi* vocem excipiti. Ut statuatis vobiscum quidquid superior præcipit *ipsius Dei* præceptum esse ac voluntatem.” He who wrote thus had not lightly observed how the spirit of man groans beneath the weight of its own freedom, and exults in bondage if only permitted to think that the chain has been voluntarily assumed. Nor had he less carefully examined the motives which may stimulate the most submissive to revolt, when he granted to his followers the utmost liberty in outward things which could be reconciled with this inward servitude;—no peculiar habit—no routine of prayers and canticles—no prescribed system of austerities—no monastic seclusion. The enslaved soul was not to be rudely reminded of her slavery. Neither must the frivolous or the feeble-minded have a place in his brotherhood; for he well knew how awful is the might of folly in all sublunary affairs. No one could be admitted who had worn, though but for one day, the habit of any other religious order; for Ignatius must be served by virgin souls and by prejudices of his own engraving. Stern initiatory discipline must probe the spirits of the Professed; for both scandal and danger would attend

the faintness of any leader in the host. Gentler probations must suffice for lay or spiritual coadjutors; for every host is incomplete without a body of irregular partisans. But the General himself—the centre and animating spirit of the whole spiritual army—he must rule for life; for ambition and cabal will fill up any short intervals of choice, and the reverence due to royalty is readily impaired by the aspect of dethroned sovereigns. He must be absolute; for human authority can on no other terms exhibit itself as the image of the divine. He must reign at a distance and in solitude; for no government is effective in which imagination has not her work to do. He must be the ultimate depository of the secrets of the conscience of each of his subjects; for irresistible power may inspire dread but not reverence, unless guided by unlimited knowledge. No subject of his may accept any ecclesiastical or civil dignity; for he must be supreme in rank as in dominion. And the ultimate object of all this scheme of government—it must be vast enough to expand the soul of the proselyte to a full sense of her own dignity; and practical enough to provide incessant occupation for his time and thoughts; and must have enough of difficulty to bring his powers into strenuous activity, and of danger to teach the lesson of mutual dependence; and there must be conflicts for the brave, and intrigues for the subtle, and solitary labours for the studious, and offices of mercy for the compassionate; and to all must be offered rewards, both temporal and eternal—in this life, the reward of a sympathy rendered intense by confinement, and stimulating by secrecy; and in the life to come, felicities of which the anxious heart might find the assurance in the promises and in the fellowship of the holy and the wise—of men whose claims to the divine favour it would be folly and impiety to doubt.

If there be in any of our universities a professor of moral philosophy lecturing on the science of human nature, let him study the Constitutions of Ignatius Loyola. They were the fruit of the solitary meditations of many years. The lamp of the retired student threw its rays on nothing but his manuscript, his crucifix, Thomas à Kempis, *De Imitatione Christi*, and the New Testament. Any other presence would have been a profane intrusion; for the work was but a transcript of thoughts imparted to his disembodied spirit when, in early manhood, it had been caught

up into the seventh heavens. As he wrote, a lambent flame, in shape like a tongue of fire, hovered about his head; and as may be read in his own hand, in a still extant paper, the hours of composition were past in tears of devotion, in holy ardour, in raptures, and amidst celestial apparitions.

Some unconscious love of power, a mind bewildered by many gross superstitions, and theoretical errors, and perhaps some tinge of insanity, may be ascribed to Ignatius Loyola; but no dispassionate reader of his writings, or of his life, will question his integrity; or deny him the praise of a devotion at once sincere, habitual, and profound. It is not to the glory of the reformers to depreciate the name of their greatest antagonist; or to think meanly of him to whom more than any other man it is owing that the Reformation was stayed, and the Church of Rome rescued from her impending doom.

In the language now current amongst us, Ignatius might be described as the leader of the Conservative against the innovating spirit of his times. It was an age, as indeed is every era of great popular revolutions, when the impulsive or centrifugal forces which tend to isolate man, preponderating over the attractive or centripetal forces which tend to congregate him, had destroyed the balance of the social system. From amidst the controversies which then agitated the world had emerged two great truths, of which, after three hundred years' debate, we are yet to find the reconciliation. It was true that the Christian Commonwealth should be one consentient body, united under one supreme head, and bound together by a community of law, of doctrine, and of worship. It was also true that each member of that body must, for himself, on his own responsibility, and at his own peril, render that worship, ascertain that doctrine, study that law, and seek the guidance of that Supreme Ruler. Between these corporate duties, and these individual obligations, there was a seeming contrariety. And yet it must be apparent only, and not real; for all truths must be consistent with each other. Here was a problem for the learned and the wise, for schools, and presses, and pulpits. But it is not by sages, nor in the spirit of philosophy, that such problems receive their practical solution. Wisdom may be the ultimate arbiter, but is seldom the immediate agent in human affairs. It is by

antagonist passions, prejudices, and follies, that the equipoise of this most belligerent planet of ours is chiefly preserved; and so it was in the sixteenth century. If Papal Rome had her Brennus, she must also have her Camillus. From the camp of the invaders arose the war-cry of absolute mental independence; from the beleaguered host, the watch-word of absolute spiritual obedience. The German pointed the way to that sacred solitude where, besides the worshipper himself, none may enter; the Spaniard to that innumerable company which, with one accord, still chant the liturgies of remotest generations. Chieftains in the most momentous warfare of which this earth had been the theatre since the subversion of Paganism, each was a rival worthy of the other in capacity, courage, disinterestedness, and the love of truth, and yet how marvellous the contrast!

Luther took to wife a nun. For thirty years together, Loyola never once looked on the female countenance. To overthrow the houses of the order to which he belonged, was the triumph of the reformer. To establish a new order on indestructible foundations, the glory of the saint. The career of the one was opened in the cell, and concluded amidst the cares of secular government. The course of life of the other, led him from a youth of camps and palaces to an old age of religious abstraction. Demons haunted both; but to the northern visionary they appeared as foul or malignant fiends, with whom he was to agonize in spiritual strife; to the southern dreamer, as angels of light marshalling his way to celestial blessedness. As best became his Teutonic honesty and singleness of heart, Luther aimed at no perfection but such as may consist with the every day cares, and the common duties, and the innocent delights of our social existence; at once the foremost of heroes, and a very man; now oppressed with melancholy, and defying the powers of darkness, satanic or human; then "rejoicing in gladness and thankfulness of heart for all his abundance;" loving and beloved; communing with the wife of his bosom, prattling with his children; surrendering his overburdened mind to the charms of music, awake to every gentle voice, and to each cheerful aspect of nature or of art; responding alike to every divine impulse and to every human feeling; no chord unstrung in his spiritual or sensitive frame, but all blending together in har-

monies as copious as the bounties of Providence, and as changeful as the vicissitudes of life. How remote from the "perfection" which Loyola proposed to himself, and which (unless we presume to distrust the Bulls by which he was beatified and canonized) we must suppose him to have attained. Drawn by infallible, not less distinctly than by fallible limners, the portrait of the military priest of the Casa Professa possesses the cold dignity, and the grace of sculpture; but is wholly wanting in the mellow tones, the lights and shadows, the rich colouring and the skilful composition of the sister art. There he stands apart from us mortal men, familiar with visions which he may not communicate, and with joys which he cannot impart. Severe in the midst of raptures, composed in the very agonies of pain; a silent, austere, and solitary man; with a heart formed for tenderness, yet mortifying even his best affections; loving mankind as his brethren, and yet rejecting their sympathy; one while a squalid, care-worn, self-lacerated pauper, tormenting himself that so he might rescue others from sensuality; and then, a monarch reigning in secluded majesty, that so he might become the benefactor of his race, or a legislator exacting, though with no selfish purposes, an obedience as submissive and as prompt as is due to the King of Kings.

Heart and soul we are for the Protestant. He who will be wiser than his Maker is but seeming wise. He who will deaden one-half of his nature to invigorate the other half, will become at best a distorted prodigy. Dark as are the pages, and mystic the character in which the truth is inscribed, he who can decipher the roll will read there, that self-adoring pride is the head spring of stoicism, whether heathen or Christian. But there is a roll neither dark nor mystic, in which the simplest and the most ignorant may learn in what the "perfection" of our humanity really consists. Throughout the glorious profusion of didactic precepts, of pregnant apothegms, of lyric and choral songs, of institutes ecclesiastical and civil, of historical legends and biographies, of homilies and apologues, of prophetic menaces, of epistolary admonitions, and of positive laws, which crowd the inspired Canon, there is still one consenting voice proclaiming to man, that the world within and the world without him were created for each other; that his interior life must be sustained and nourished by intercourse



with external things; and that he then most nearly approaches to the perfection of his nature, when most conversant with the joys and sorrows of life, and most affected by them, he is yet the best prepared to renounce the one or to endure the other, in cheerful submission to the will of Heaven.

Unalluring, and on the whole unlovely as it is, the image of Loyola must ever command the homage of the world. No other uninspired man, unaided by military or civil power, and making no appeal to the passions of the multitude, has had the genius to conceive, the courage to attempt, and the success to establish, a polity teeming with results at once so momentous and so distinctly foreseen. Amidst his ascetic follies, and his half crazy visions, and despite all the coarse daubing with which the miracle-mongers of his Church have defaced it, his character is destitute neither of sublimity nor of grace. They were men of no common stamp with whom he lived, and they regarded him with an unbounded reverence. On the anniversary of his death Baronius and Bellarmine met to worship at his tomb; and there, with touching and unpremeditated eloquence, joined to celebrate his virtues. His successor Laynez was so well convinced that Loyola was beloved by the Deity above all other men, as to declare it impossible that any request of his should be refused. Xavier was wont to kneel when he wrote letters to him; to implore the Divine aid through the merits of his "holy Father Ignatius," and to carry about his autograph as a sacred relic. In popular estimation, the very house in which he once dwelt had been so hallowed by his presence, as to shake to the foundation if thoughts unbecoming its purity found entrance into the mind of any inmate. Of his theopathy, as exhibited in his letters, in his recorded discourse, and in his "Spiritual Exercises," it is perhaps difficult for the colder imaginations and the Protestant reserve of the North to form a correct estimate. Measured by such a standard, it must be pronounced irreverent and erotic;—a libation on the altar at once too profuse and too little filtered from the dross of human passion. But to his fellow men he was not merely benevolent, but compassionate, tolerant, and candid. However inflexible in exacting from his chosen followers an all-enduring constancy, he was gentle to others, especially to the young and the weak; and

would often make an amiable though awkward effort to promote their recreation. He was never heard to mention a fault or a crime, except to suggest an apology for the offender. "Humbly to conceal humility, and to shun the praise of being humble," was the maxim and the habit of his later life; and on that principle he maintained the unostentatious decencies of his rank as General of his order at the Casa Professa; a convent which had been assigned at Rome for their residence. There he dwelt, conducting a correspondence more extensive and important than any which issued from the cabinets of Paris or Madrid. In sixteen years he had established twelve Jesuit Provinces in Europe, India, Africa, and Brazil; and more than a hundred colleges or houses for the Professed and the Probationers, already amounting to many thousands. His missionaries had traversed every country, the most remote and barbarous, which the enterprise of his age had opened to the merchants of the West. The devout resorted to him for guidance, the miserable for relief, the wise for instruction, and the rulers of the earth for succour. Men felt that there had appeared among them one of those monarchs who reign in right of their own native supremacy; and to whom the feebleness of others must yield either a ready or a reluctant allegiance. It was a conviction recorded by his disciples on his tomb, in these memorable and significant words: "Whoever thou mayest be who hast portrayed to thine own imagination Pompey, or Cæsar, or Alexander, open thine eyes to the truth, and let this marble teach thee how much greater a conqueror than they was Ignatius."

Whatever may have been the comparative majesty of the Cæsarian and the Ignatian conquests, it was true of either, that on the death of the conqueror the succession to his diadem hung long in anxious suspense. Our tale descends from the sublime and the heroic to the region of ordinary motives and ordinary men. According to the constitution of the order, the choice of the General was to be made in a chapter, of which the fully Professed, and they alone, were members. Of that body Jago Laynez was the eldest and most eminent, and from his dying bed (so at least it was supposed) he summoned his brethren to hold the election at the Casa Professa. The citation was unanswered. A majority of the whole electoral college were detained in Spain by Philip II., who was then en-

gaged in his war with the Papal court; and in this extremity Laynez was nominated to the provisional office of vicar-general. That promotion is a specific in some forms of bodily disease, is as certain as any apothegm in Galen. Full of renovated life, the vicar-general at once assumed all the powers of his great predecessor, and gave prompt evidence that they had fallen into no feeble hands. But neither was that a feeble grasp in which the keys of St. Peter were held. Hot-headed and imperious as he was, Paul IV. had quailed in the solemn presence of Loyola; but now, as he believed, had found the time for arresting the advance of a power which he had learned to regard with jealousy. He began (as an Englishman might express it) by putting the vacant generalship into Commission, and assigned to Laynez nothing more than a share in that divided rule. A voyage to Spain, where in his own country and among his own friends his election would be secure, was the next resource of the vicar-general; but a Papal mandate appeared, forbidding any Jesuit to quit the precincts of Rome. Thus thwarted, Laynez resolved on immediately elevating into the class of the Professed as many of his associates as would form a college numerous enough for the choice of a head; but the vigilant old Pontiff detected and prohibited the design. Foiled in every manœuvre, nothing remained to the aspiring vicar but to await the return of peace. It came at length, and with it came from Spain the electors so long and anxiously expected.

Lowly was the chamber in which they were convened; nor did there meet that day within the compass of the Seven Hills a company, in outward semblance, less imposing; and yet, scarcely had the assembled Comitia, to whose shouts those hills had once re-echoed, ever conferred on Prætor or Proconsul a power more real or more extensive than that which those homely men were now about to bestow. But Laynez seemed doomed to yet another disappointment. The chapel doors were thrown open, and the Cardinal Pacheco appearing among them, interdicted, in the name of the Pope, all farther proceedings, unless they would consent to choose their General for three years only; and would engage, like other religious men, daily to chant the appointed offices of the Church. What are the limits of unlimited obedience? When, a century and a

half ago, our own casuists laboured for an answer to that knotty problem, they were but unconscious imitators of Jago Laynez and his companions. Maugre vows, and Pope, and Cardinal, they forthwith elected him General for life; nor was one litany the more sung by the Jesuits for all the Papal bidding.

Yet, the formal decencies of the scene, how well were they maintained? Joyful thanksgivings on the side of the electors; an aspect eloquent with reluctance, grief, and the painful sense of responsibility on the part of the new General. Is it incredible that some motives nobler and more pure than those of mere secular ambition may have animated Laynez on this occasion? Probably not; for there are few of us in whom antagonist principles do not obtain this kind of divided triumph; and the testimonies to his virtues are such and so many as almost to command assent to their substantial truth. Of the twenty-four books of the history of Orlandinus, eight are devoted to his administration of the affairs of the Order. They extort a willing acknowledgment, that he possessed extraordinary abilities; and a half-reluctant admission, that he may have combined with them a more than common degree of genuine piety.

Laynez would seem to have been born to supply the intellectual deficiencies of Ignatius. He was familiar with the whole compass of the theological literature of his age, and with all the moral sciences which a theologian was then required to cultivate. With these stores of knowledge he had made himself necessary to the first General. Loyola consulted, employed, and trusted, but apparently did not like him. It is stated by Orlandinus, that there was no other of his eminent followers whom the great patriarch of the society treated with such habitual rigour, and yet none who rendered him such important services. "Do you not think," said Ignatius to him, "that in framing their constitutions, the founders of the religious orders were inspired?" "I do," was the answer, "so far as the general scheme and outline were concerned." The inspired saint, therefore, took for his province the compilation of the text, the uninspired scholar, the preparation of the authoritative comment. For himself, the lawgiver claimed the praise of having raised an edifice, of which the plan and the arrangement were divine. To his fellow-labourer he assigned the merit of having supported it by the solid foundation of a

learning, which, however excellent, was yet entirely human. An example will best explain this division of labour.

"In theologiâ legetur Vetus et Novum Testamentum, et doctrina scholastica Divi Thomæ"—is the text. "Prælegetur etiam magister sententiarum; sed si videatur temporis decursu, alius autor studentibus utilior futurus, ut si aliqua summa, vel liber theologiæ scholasticæ, conficeretur, qui nostris temporibus accommodatio videretur"—"prælegi poterit"—is the comment. Ignatius was content that the Divine Thomas should be installed among the Jesuits as the permanent interpreter of the sacred oracles. Laynez, with deeper foresight, perceived that the time was coming when they must discover a teacher "better suited to times." It was a prediction fulfilled shortly after his death, in the person of Molina, who was himself the pupil of the second General of the order.

To Laynez belongs the praise or the reproach of having revived, in modern times, the Molinist or Arminian doctrine. Our latest posterity will debate, as our remotest ancestry have debated, the soundness of that creed; but that it was "temporibus accommodatio," few will be inclined to dispute. The times evidently required that the great antagonists of Protestantism should inculcate a belief more comprehensive, and more flexible, than that of Augustine or of St. Thomas. And if to the adoption of those opinions may be traced much of the danger and disrepute to which the society was afterwards exposed, to the same cause may be ascribed much of the secret of their vitality and their strength.

The doctrines of Molina were hazarded by Laynez, even in the bosom of the Council of Trent; where, though not constitutionally brave, he dared the reproach of heresy and Pelagianism. But, in the noblest theatre for the display of eloquence which the world had seen since the fall of the Roman commonwealth, he exhibited all the hardihood which a conscious superiority in the power of speech will impart to the least courageous. Amidst cries of indignation, he maintained the freedom of the will, and the ultramontane doctrines, the most unwelcome to his audience; and vehemently opposed the demand of more than half of Europe for the admission of the laity to the cup. He felt that resentment must give way to those feelings on which a great speaker seldom relies in vain. He spoke



from a position best befitting an ostentatious humility, and therefore the most remote from the thrones of the Papal legates, and the ambassadors of Christendom. Even those thrones were for a moment abandoned. Cardinals, Bishops, Counts, and Abbots, thronged around his chair; Generals and Doctors obeyed the same impulse; and for two successive hours a circle more illustrious for rank and learning than ever before surrounded the tribune of an orator, rewarded his efforts by their profound and silent admiration. He spoke at Paris, and he preached at Rome, with a similar applause; and yet, on examining the only two of his speeches which have been preserved by Orlandinus, it is difficult to detect the charm which once seduced the haughtiest Prelates into a passing forgetfulness of their dignity. The eloquence of Laynez would appear to have been neither impassioned nor imaginative, nor of that intense earnestness which seems to despise the very rules by the observance of which it triumphs. Luminous argumentation, clothed in transparent language, and delivered with facility and grace, was probably the praise to which he was entitled—no vulgar praise indeed; for, amidst the triumphs of oratory, few are greater or more welcome than that of infusing order, without fatigue, into the chaotic thoughts of an inquisitive audience.

Ambition clothed in rags, subtlety under the guise of candour, are the offences which the enemies of his order have ascribed to Laynez. But a man who, in the sixteenth century, refused a Cardinal's hat, (his refusal of the Papacy is a more apocryphal story,) can hardly have been the victim of a low desire for worldly honours; and hypocrisy is a charge which every one must bear who has to do with opponents incredulous of virtue superior to their own. For eighteen years the head of a body distrusted and unpopular from its infancy, he had neither hereditary rank to avert the envy which waits on greatness, nor the lofty daring to which the world is ever prompt to yield idolatrous homage. In his hands the weapons of Ignatius or of Xavier would have been impotent; but he wielded his own with address and with admirable effect. To him his society were first indebted for their characteristic doctrine, for the possession and the fame of learning, for many enlargements of their privileges, for a more intimate alliance with the Papacy, and the more pronounced hostility of the

Reformers. He first established for them that authority in the Cabinets of Europe, on which, at no distant time, the edifice of their temporal power was to rest; and it was his melancholy distinction to number among his disciples the infamous Catherine of Medici, and her less odious, because feebler, son. He was associated with them at the very time when they were revolving the greatest crime with which the annals of Christendom have been polluted. With the guilt of that massacre his memory is, however, unstained; except so far as the doctrines he inculcated, in his debates at Paris with Beza and Peter Martyr, may have taught the sovereigns to think lightly of any bloodshed which should rid the world of a party abhorred of God, and hateful to the enlightened eye of man.

Gifted with extraordinary talents, profound learning, flexible address, and captivating eloquence, Laynez fell short of that standard at which, alone, men may inscribe their names in the roll sacred to those who have reigned over their fellow mortals by right divine, because a right inherent and indefeasible. Without the genius to devise, or the glowing passion to achieve, great things, none may be associated with those kings of the earth on whose brows nature herself has set the diadem. Far surpassing in mere intellectual resources both Xavier and Ignatius, the fiery element native to their souls was uninhabitable to his. Laynez was the first, if not the most eminent, example of the results of Loyola's discipline; and illustrates the effect of concentrating all the interests of life, and all the affections of the heart, within the narrow circle of one contracted fellowship. It yielded in him, as it has often produced in others, a vigorous but a stunted development of character; a kind of social selfishness and sectional virtue; a subordination of philanthropy to the love of caste; a spirit irreclaimably servile, because exulting in its own servitude; a temper consistent, indeed, with great actions and often contributing to them, but destructive (at least in ordinary minds) of that free and cordial sympathy with man as man;—of those careless graces, and of that majestic repose, which touch and captivate the heart, and to which must, in part at least, be ascribed the sacred fascination exercised over us all by the simple records of the life of Him whose name the society of Jesus had assumed.

On the 2d of July 1565 the Casa Professa, usually the

scene of a profound stillness, was agitated by an unwonted excitement. Men of austere demeanour might be seen there clasping each others' hands, and voices habitually mute were interchanging hearty congratulations. One alone appeared to take no share in the common joy. As if overpowered by some strange and unwelcome tidings, he seemed by imploring gestures to deprecate a decision against which his paralyzed lips in vain attempted to protest. His age might be nearly fifty, his dress mean and sordid, and toil or suffering had ploughed their furrows in his pallid cheek; but he balanced his tall and still graceful figure with a soldier's freedom, and gazed on his associates with a countenance cast in that mould which ladies love and artists emulate. They called him Father Francis; and on the death of Laynez their almost unanimous suffrage had just hailed him as the third General of the Order of Jesus. The wish for rank and power was never more sincerely disclaimed, for never had they been forced on any one who had a larger experience of their vanity.

In the female line Father Francis was the grandson of Ferdinand of Arragon, and therefore the near kinsman of the Emperor Charles V. Among his paternal ancestry he could boast or lament the names of Alexander VI. and of Cæsar Borgia. Of that house, eminent alike for their wealth, their honours, and their crimes, he was the lineal representative; and had, in early manhood, inherited from his father the patrimony and the title of the Dukes of Gandia.

Don Francis Borgia, as if to rescue the name he bore from the infamy of his progenitors, exhaled, even in his childish days, the odour of sanctity. With each returning month, he cast a lot to determine which he should personate of the saints with whose names it was studded on the calendar. In his tenth year, with a virtue unsung and unconceived by the *Musæ Etonienses*, he played at saints so perfectly as to inflict a vigorous chastisement on his own naked person. It is hard to resist the wish that the scourge had been more resolutely wielded by the arm of his tutor. So seems to have thought his maternal uncle Don John of Arragon, Archbishop of Saragossa. Taking the charge of his nephew, that high-born prelate compelled him to study alternately the lessons of the riding-master and those of

the master of the sentences; and in his nineteenth year sent him to complete his education at the court of his imperial cousin.

Ardent as were still the aspirations of the young courtier for the monastic life, no one in that gallant circle bore himself more bravely in the *menage*, or sheathed his sword with a steadier hand in the throat of the half-maddened bull, or more skilfully disputed with his sovereign the honours of the tournament. As the youthful knight, bowing to the saddle-tree, lowered his spear before the "Queen of Beauty," many a full dark eye beamed with a deeper lustre; but his triumph was incomplete and worthless unless it won the approving smile of Eleonora de Castro. That smile was not often refused. But the romance of Don Francis begins where other romances terminate. Foremost in the train of Charles and Isabella, the husband of the fair Eleonora still touched his lute with unrivalled skill in the halls of the Escorial, or followed the quarry across the plains of Castile in advance of the most ardent falconer. Yet that music was universally selected from the offices of the church; and in the very agnony of the chase, just as the wheeling hawk paused for his last deadly plunge, (génius of Nimrod, listen!) he would avert his eyes and ride slowly home, the inventor of a matchless effort of penitential self-denial.

With Charles himself for his fellow pupil, Don Francis studied the arts of war and fortification under the once celebrated Sainte Croix, and practised in Africa the lessons he had been taught;—earning the double praise, that in the camp he was the most magnificent, in the field the most adventurous, of all the leaders in that vaunted expedition. At the head of a troop enlisted and maintained by himself, he attended the emperor to the Milanese and Provence; and, in honourable acknowledgment of his services, was selected by Charles to lay a report of the campaign before the empress in person, at Segovia. Towards her he felt an almost filial regard. She had long been the zealous patron and the cordial friend of himself and of Eleonora; and at the public festivals which celebrated the victories of Charles, and the meeting of the states of Castile at Toledo, they shone among the most brilliant of the satellites by which her throne was encircled.

At the moment of triumph the inexorable arm was unbared which so often, as in mockery of human pomp, con-

founda together the world's bravest pageants and the humiliations of the grave. Dust to dust and ashes to ashes, but, when the imperial fall, not without one last poor assertion of their departed dignity. Isabella might not be laid in the sepulchre of the kings of Spain, until amidst the funeral rites the soldered coffin had been opened, the ceremonies removed, and some grandee of the highest rank had been enabled to depose, that he had seen within them the very body of the deceased sovereign. Such, in pursuance of an ancient custom, was the duty confided to the zeal of Don Francis Borgia, nor was any one better fitted for such a trust. The eye, now for ever closed, had never turned to him but with maternal kindness, and every lineament of that serene and once eloquent countenance was indelibly engraven on his memory. Amidst the half-uttered prayers which commended her soul to the Divine mercy, and the low dirge of the organ, he advanced with streaming eyes, and reverently raised the covering which concealed the secrets of the grave, when—but why or how portray the appalling and loathsome spectacle? That gentle brow, that eloquent countenance, that form so lately raised on earth's proudest throne, and extolled with an almost adoring homage! Don Francis turned from the sight to shudder and to pray.

It was the great epoch in the life of Borgia. In the eyes of the world, indeed, he may have been unchanged; but in his eyes the whole aspect of that world was altered. Lord of a princely fortune, the heir of an illustrious house, the favourite kinsman of the Emperor of the West, renowned in the very flower of his youth as a warrior, a courtier, and a musician, his home hallowed by conjugal love, and gladdened by the sports of his children; for whom had life a deeper interest, or who could erect on a surer basis a loftier fabric of more brilliant hopes? Those interests and hopes he deliberately resigned, and, at the age of twenty-nine, bound himself by a solemn vow, that in the event of his surviving Eleonora, he would end his days as a member of some religious order. He had gazed on the hideous triumph of death and sin over prospects still more splendid than his own. For him the soothing illusions of existence were no more—earth and its inhabitants, withering under the curse of their Maker, might put on their empty gauds, and for some transient hour dream and talk of happiness. But the curse was there, and there would it lie, crushing



the frivolous spirit the most when felt the least, and consigning alike to that foul debasement the lovely and the brave; the sylph now floating through the giddy dance, and the warrior now proudly treading the field of victory.

From such meditations Charles endeavoured to recall his friend to the common duties of life. He required him to assume the viceroyalty of Catalonia, and adorned him with the cross of the order of Alcantara, then of all chivalric honours the noblest and the most highly prized. His administration was firm, munificent, and just; it forms the highest era of his life, and is especially signalized by the same sedulous care for the education of the young, which afterwards formed his highest praise as General of the Order of Jesus.

Ingenious above all men in mortifying his natural affections, Don Francis could not neglect the occasion which his new dignities afforded him, of incurring much wholesome contumely. Sumptuous banquets must be given in honour of his sovereign, when he could at once fast and be despised for fasting. To exhibit himself in penitential abasement before the people under his authority, would give to penitence the appropriate accompaniment of general contempt. On the festival of "the Invention of the Holy Cross," mysteries not unlike those of the *Bona Dea* were to be celebrated by the ladies of Barcelona, when, to prevent the profane intrusion of any of the coarser sex, the viceroy himself undertook the office of sentinel. With a naked dagger in his hand, a young nobleman demanded entrance, addressing to the viceroy insults such as every gentleman is bound, under the heaviest penalty of the laws of chivalry, to expiate by blood. A braver man did not tread the soil of Spain than Don Francis, nor any one to whom the reproach of poltroonery was more hateful. And yet his sword did not leap from his scabbard. With a calm rebuke, and courteous demeanour, he allowed the bravo to enter the sacred precincts—preferring the imputation of cowardice, though stinging like an adder, to the sin of avenging himself, and, indeed, to the duty of maintaining his lawful authority. History has omitted to tell what were the weapons, or what the incantation, by which the ladies promptly ejected the insolent intruder, nor has she recorded how they afterwards received their guardian knight of Alcantara. Her only care has been to excite our

admiration for this most illustrious victory in the bosom of Don Francis, of the meekness of the saint over the human passions of the soldier.

At the end of four years Don Francis was relieved by the death of his father from his viceregal office, and assumed his hereditary title of Duke of Gandia. His vassals exulted in the munificence of their new chief. The ancient retainers of his family lived on his bounty—cottages, convents, and hospitals, rose on his estates—fortresses were built to check the ravages of the Moorish corsairs, and the mansion of his ancestors reappeared in all its ancient splendour. In every work of piety and mercy the wise and gentle Eleonora was the rival of her lord. But it was the only strife which ever agitated the Castle of Gandia. Austerities were practised there, but gloom and lassitude were unknown; nor did the bright suns of Spain gild any feudal ramparts, within which love, and peace the child of love, shed their milder light with a more abiding radiance.

But on that countenance, hitherto so calm and so submissive, might at length be traced the movements of an inward tempest, with which, even when prostrate before the altar, the Duke of Gandia strove in vain. Conversant with every form of self-inflicted suffering, how should he find strength to endure the impending death of Eleonora! His was a prayer transcending the resources of language and of thought; it was the mute agony of a breaking heart. But after the whirlwind and the fire, was heard the still small voice. It said, or seemed to say, "If it be thy will, she shall recover; but not for her real welfare nor for thine." Adoring gratitude swept away every feeble emotion, and the suppliant's grief at length found utterance. "Thy will be done. Thou knowest what is best for us. Whom have we in heaven but thee, and whom upon earth should we desire in comparison of thee?" At the age of thirty-six the Duke of Gandia committed to the tomb the frame once animated by a spirit from which not death itself could separate him. In the sacred retirement to which in that event he had devoted his remaining days, Eleonora would still unite her prayers to his; and as each of those days should decline into the welcome shadows of evening, one stage the more towards his reunion with her would have been traversed.

The Castle of Gandia was still hung with the funeral

draperies when a welcome though unexpected guest arrived there. It was Peter Faber, the officiating priest at the Crypt of Montmartre, charged by Ignatius with a mission to promote the cause of Christian education in Spain. Aided by his counsels, and by the letters of the patriarch, the duke erected on his estates a church, a college, and a library, and placed them under the care of teachers selected by Ignatius. The sorrows of the duke were relieved as his wealth flowed still more copiously in this new channel of beneficence; and the universities of Alcala and Seville were enlarged by his bounty with similar foundations. But, as Faber remarked, a still nobler edifice was yet to be erected on the soul of the founder himself. The first stone of it was laid in the duke's performance of the Spiritual Exercises. To the completion of this invisible but imperishable building, the remainder of his life was inflexibly devoted.

With Ignatius the duke had long maintained a correspondence, in which the stately courtesies of Spanish noblemen not ungracefully temper the severe tones of patriarchal authority and filial reverence. Admission into the order of Jesus was an honour for which, in this case, the aspirant was humbly content, and was wisely permitted long to wait and sue. To study the biography, that he might imitate the life of Him by whose holy name the society was called; to preach in his own household, or at the wicket of the nunnery of the ladies of St. Clair; and day by day, to place in humiliating contrast some proof of the divine goodness, and some proof of his own demerit, were the first probationary steps which the duke was required to tread in the toilsome path on which he had thus entered. It was a path from which Philip, then governing Spain with the title of regent, would have willingly seduced him. He consulted him on the most critical affairs; summoned him to take a high station in the states of Castile; and pressed on his acceptance the office of grand master of the royal household. It was declined in favour of the Duke of Alva. Had Gandia preferred the duties of his secular rank to those of his religious aspirations, Spain might have had a saint the less and seven provinces the more. With the elevation of Alva, the butcheries in the Netherlands, the disgrace of Spain, and the independence of Holland might have been averted.

Warned by his escape, the duke implored with renewed earnestness his immediate admission into the order; nor was Ignatius willing that his proselyte should again incur such dangers. At the chapel of his own college he accordingly pronounced the irrevocable vows; a Papal bull having dispensed during a term of four years with any public avowal of the change. They were passed in the final adjustment of his secular affairs. He had lived in the splendour appropriate to his rank and fortune, and in the exercise of the bounty becoming his eminence in the Christian commonwealth. But now all was to be abandoned, even the means of almsgiving, for he was himself henceforth to live on the alms of others. He gave his children in marriage to the noblest houses in Spain and Portugal, transferred to his eldest son the enjoyment of the patrimonial estates of Gandia, and then, at the age of forty, meekly betook himself to the study of scholastic divinity, of the traditions of the church, and of the canons of the general councils. He even submitted to all the rules, and performed all the public exercises enforced on the youngest student. Such was his piety that the thorny fagots of the schoolmen fed instead of smothering the flame; and on the margin of his Thomas Aquinas might be seen some devout aspiration, extracted by his sacred alchemy from each subtle distinction in the text. Never before or since was the degree of Doctor in Divinity, to which he now proceeded, so hardly earned or so well deserved.

Two of the brothers of the duke had been members of the sacred college, and his humility had refused the purple offered at the instance of the emperor to two of his sons. But how should the new doctor avert from his own head the ecclesiastical cap of maintenance with which Charles was now desirous to replace the ducal coronet? He fled the presence of his imperial patron; made and executed his own testamentary dispositions, delivered his last parental charge to his eldest son, and bade a final adieu to his weeping family. The gates of the castle of Gandia closed on their self-banished lord. He went forth, like Francis Xavier, chanting the song of David—"When Israel went out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from a strange people,"—adding from another strain of the royal minstrel, "Our bonds are broken and we are delivered." He lived for more than twenty years from this time, and in his future

missions into Spain often passed the gates of the castle, but never more re-entered them. He became a stranger even to his children, never again passing so much as a single day in their society, or even permitting himself to become acquainted with their offspring.

As the bird set free to her nest, so hasted the emancipated duke to take his seat at the footstool of Ignatius. Yet in his route through Ferrara and Florence, his sacred impatience was arrested, and his humility confirmed, by the unwelcome honours yielded to him by his kinsmen, the reigning sovereigns of those duchies. He would have entered Rome by night; but in the city of triumphs and ovations, the victorious Loyola must exhibit so illustrious a captive. Attended by the ambassador of Spain, by a prince of the house of Colonna, and by a long train of cardinals, priests, and nobles, the Duke of Gandia advanced in solemn procession to the Casa Professa. There, in the presence of his General, his wearied spirit found at length the repose which the most profuse liberality of fortune had been unable to bestow. With tears of joy he kissed the feet of the patriarch and of his Professed brethren, esteeming the meanest office in their household an honour too exalted for so unworthy an associate; and then, in a general confession, poured into the ear of Ignatius every secret of his conscience from the dawn of life to that long desired hour.

Such zeal was a treasure too precious to be left without some great and definite object; and as the duke was still the steward of some of this world's treasures, which he had devoted to sacred uses, they were employed in building at Rome the church and college afterwards so famous as the *College de Propaganda Fide*. One only secular care still awaited him. His rank as a grandee of Spain, and the cross of Alcantara, could not be laid aside without the consent of the emperor. It was solicited with all the grace of an accomplished courtier, and all the fervour of a saint. But while he awaited at Rome the answer of Charles, a new alarm disturbed the serenity of the Casa Professa. The dreaded purple was again pressed on him with all the weight of Papal admonition. To avoid it, Gandia fled the presence of the Pope, and Ignatius returned to Spain, performed a pilgrimage to the castle of Loyola, kissed the hallowed ground, and then burying himself in a Jesuit College



at Ognato, once more awaited the decision of the emperor. It soon arrived. He was no longer a duke, a knight of St. Iago, nor even a Spanish gentleman. Solemnly, and in due legal form, he renounced all these titles, and with them all his property and territorial rights. Even his secular dress was laid aside, and his head was prepared by the tonsure for the Episcopal touch, emblematic of the most awful mystery. The astonished spectators collected and preserved the holy relics. And now bent in lowly prostration before the altar at Ognato, the Father Francis had no farther sacrifice to offer there, but the sacrifice of a heart emptied of all the interests and of all the affections of the world. Long and silent was his prayer, but it was now unattended with any trace of disorder. The tears he shed were such as might have bedewed the cheek of the First Man before he had tasted the bitterness of sin. He rose from his knees, bade a last farewell to his attendants; and Father Francis was left alone with his Creator.

It was a solitude not long to be maintained. The fame of his devotion filled the Peninsula. All who needed spiritual counsel, and who wished to indulge an idle curiosity, resorted to his cell. Kings sought his advice, wondering congregations hung on his lips, and two at least of the grandees of Spain imitated his example. His spiritual triumphs were daily more and more splendid; and, if he might escape the still threatened promotion into the college of Cardinals, might be as enduring as his life. The authority of Ignatius, not unaided by some equivocal exercise of his ingenuity, at length placed Father Francis beyond the reach of this last danger. They both went down to the grave without witnessing the debasement of their order by any ecclesiastical dignity.

But there was yet one tie to the pomp and vanity of this world, which could not be entirely broken. During his viceregal administration, Father Francis had on one occasion traversed the halls of the Castle of Barcelona in deep and secret conference with his imperial cousin. Each at that interview imparted to the other his design of devoting to religious retirement the interval which should intervene between the business and the close of life. At every season of disappointment Charles reverted to this purpose, and abandoned or postponed it with each return of success. But now, broken with sickness and sorrow, he had

fixed his residence in a monastery in Estremadura, and summoned the former viceroy of Catalonia to the presence of his early friend and patron. Falling on his knees, as in times of yore, Father Francis offered to impress the kiss of homage on the hand which had so lately borne the sceptre of half the civilized world. But Charles embraced his cousin, and compelled him to sit, and to sit covered, by his side. Long and frequent were their conversations; but the record of them transmitted to us by the historians of the Order of Jesus, has but little semblance of authenticity. Charles assails, and Borgia defends the new Institute, and the imperial disputant of course yields to the combined force of eloquence and truth. It seems less improbable that the publication of *Memoirs of the life of the Emperor*, to be written by himself, was one subject of serious debate at these interviews, and that the good father dissuaded it. If the tale be true, he has certainly one claim the less to the gratitude of later times. What seems certain is, that he undertook and executed some secret mission from Charles to the court of Portugal, that he acted as one of the executors of his will, and delivered a funeral oration in praise of the deceased emperor before the Spanish court at Valladolid.

From this point, the life of Borgia merges in the general history of the order to which he had attached himself. It is a passage of history full of the miracles of self-denial, and of miracles in the more accurate acceptation of the word. To advance the cause of education, and to place in the hands of his own society the control of that mighty engine, was the labour which Father Francis as their General chiefly proposed to himself. His success was complete, and he lived to see the establishment, in almost every state of Europe, of colleges formed on the model of that which he had himself formed in the town of Gandia.

Borgia is celebrated by his admirers as the most illustrious of all conquerors of the appetites and passions of our common nature; and the praise, such as it is, may well be conceded to him. No other saint in the calendar ever abdicated or declined so great an amount of worldly grandeur and domestic happiness. No other embraced poverty and pain in forms more squalid, or more revolting to flesh and blood. So strange and shocking are the stories of his fla-

gellations, of the diseases contracted by them, and of the sickening practices by which he tormented his senses, that even to read them is of itself no light penance. In the same spirit, our applause is demanded for feats of humility, and prodigies of obedience, and raptures of devotion, so extravagant, that his biographers might seem to have assumed the office of penitential executors to the saint; and to challenge for his memory some of the disgust and contempt which when living he so studiously courted. And yet Borgia was no ordinary man.

He had great talents with a narrow capacity. Under the control of minds more comprehensive than his own, he could adopt and execute their wider views with admirable address and vigour. With rare powers both of endurance and of action, he was the prey of a constitutional melancholy, which made him dependent on the more sanguine spirit of his guides for all his aims and for all his hopes; but once rescued from the agony of selecting his path, he moved along it not merely with firmness but with impetuosity. All his impulses came from without; but when once given they could not readily be arrested. The very dejection and self-distrust of his nature rendered him more liable than other men to impressions at once deep and abiding. Thus he was a saint in his infancy at the bidding of his nurse—then a cavalier at the command of his uncle—an inamorato because the empress desired it—a warrior and a viceroy because such was the pleasure of Charles—a devotee from seeing a corpse in a state of decomposition—a founder of colleges on the advice of Peter Faber—a Jesuit at the will of Ignatius—and General of the order because his colleagues would have it so. Yet each of these characters when once assumed, was performed, not merely with constancy, but with high and just applause. His mind was like a sycophant plant, feeble when alone, but of admirable vigour and luxuriance when properly sustained. A whole creation of such men would have been unequal to the work of Ignatius Loyola; but, in his grasp, one such man could perform a splendid though but a secondary service. His life was more eloquent than all the homilies of Chrysostom. Descending from one of the most brilliant heights of human prosperity, he exhibited every where, and in an aspect the most intelligible and impressive to his contemporaries, the awful power of the

principles by which he was impelled. Had he lived in the times and in the society of his infamous kinsmen, Borgia would not improbably have shared their disastrous renown. But his dependent nature, moulded by a far different influence, rendered him a canonized saint; an honourable, just and virtuous man; one of the most eminent ministers of a polity as benevolent in intention as it was gigantic in design; and the founder of a system of education pregnant with results of almost matchless importance. His miracles may be not disadvantageously compared with those of the Baron Monchausen; but it would be less easy to find a meet comparison for his genuine virtues. They triumph over all the silly legends and all the real follies which obscure his character. His whole mature life was but one protracted martyrdom, for the advancement of what he esteemed the perfection of his own nature, and the highest interests of his fellow-men. Though he maintained an intimate personal intercourse with Charles IX. and his mother, and enjoyed their highest favour, there is no reason to suppose that he was intrusted with their atrocious secret. Even in the land of the Inquisition he had firmly refused to lend the influence of his name to that sanguinary tribunal; for there was nothing morose in his fanaticism, nor mean in his subservience. Such a man as Francis Borgia could hardly become a persecutor. His own church raised altars to his name. Other churches have neglected or despised it. In that all-wise and all-compassionate judgment, which is uninvaded by our narrow prejudices and by our unhallowed feelings, his fervent love of God and of man was doubtless permitted to cover the multitude of his theoretical errors and real extravagances. Human justice is severe, not merely because man is censorious, but because he reasonably distrusts himself, and fears lest his weakness should confound the distinctions of good and evil. Divine justice is lenient, because there alone love can flow in all its unfathomable depths and boundless expansion—impeded by no dread of error, and diverted by no misplaced sympathies.

To Ignatius, the founder of the order of the Jesuits; to Xavier, the great leader in their missionary enterprises; to Laynez, the author of their peculiar system of theology; and to Borgia, the architect of their system of education, two names are to be added to complete the roll of the great men from whose hands their Institute received the

form it retains to the present hour. These are Bellarmine, from whom they learned the arts and resources of controversy; and Acquaviva, the fifth in number, but in effect the fourth of their Generals—who may be described as the Numa Pompilius of the order. There is in the early life of Bellarmine a kind of pastoral beauty, and even in his later days a grace, and a simplicity so winning, that it costs some effort to leave such a theme unattempted. The character of Acquaviva, one of the most memorable rulers and lawgivers of his age, it would be a still greater effort to attempt.

“Henceforth let no man say,” (to mount on the stilts of dear old Samuel Johnson) “come, I will write a disquisition on the history, the doctrines, and the morality of the Jesuits—at least let no man say so who has not subdued the lust of story-telling.” Filled to their utmost limits, lie before us the sheets so recently destined to that ambitious enterprise. Perhaps it may be as well thus to have yielded to the allurements which has marred the original design. If in later days the disciples of Ignatius, obeying the laws of all human institutions, have exhibited the sure though slow development of the seeds of error and of crime, sown by the authors of their polity, it must at least be admitted that they were men of no common mould. It is something to know that an impulse, which after three centuries is still unspent, proceeded from hands of gigantic power, and that their power was moral as much as intellectual, or much more so. In our own times much indignation and much alarm are thrown away on innovators of a very different stamp. From the ascetics of the common room, from men whose courage rises high enough only to hint at their unpopular opinions, and whose belligerent passions soar at nothing more daring than to worry some unfortunate professor, it is almost ludicrous to fear any great movement on the theatre of human affairs. When we see these dainty gentlemen in rags, and hear of them from the snows of the Himalaya, we may begin to tremble. The slave of his own appetites, in bondage to conventional laws, his spirit emasculated by the indulgences, or corroded by the cares of life, hardly daring to act, to speak, or to think for himself, man—gregarious and idolatrous man—worships the world in which he lives, adopts its maxims, and tread its beaten paths. To rouse him



from his lethargy, and to give a new current to his thoughts heroes appear from time to time on the verge of his horizon, and hero-worship, Pagan or Christian, withdraws him for awhile from still baser idolatry. To contemplate the motives and the career of such men, may teach much which well deserves the knowing; but nothing more clearly than this—that no one can have shrines erected to his memory in the hearts of men of distant generations, unless his own heart was an altar on which daily sacrifices of fervent devotion, and magnanimous self-denial, were offered to the only true object of human worship.

## TAYLOR'S EDWIN THE FAIR.\*

(Edinburgh Review, 1843.)

THIS is a dramatic poem full of life and beauty, thronged with picturesque groups, and with characters profoundly discriminated. They converse in language the most chaste, harmonious, and energetic. In due season fearful calamities strike down the lovely and the good. Yet "Edwin the Fair" is not to be classed among tragedies, in the full and exact sense of the expression.

"To purge the soul by pity and terror," it is not enough that the stage should exhibit those who tread the high places of the earth as victims either of unmerited distress, or of retributive justice. It is farther necessary that their sorrows should be deviations from the usual economy of human life. They must differ in their origin, and their character, from those ills which we have learned to regard as merely the established results of familiar causes. They must be attended by the rustling of the dark wings of fate, or by the still more awful march of an all-controlling Providence. The domain of the tragic theatre lies in that dim region where the visible and invisible worlds are brought into contact; and where the wise and the simple alike perceive and acknowledge a present deity, or demon. It is by the shocks and abrupt vicissitudes of fortune, that the dormant sense of our dependence on that inscrutable power in the grasp of which we lie, is quickened into life. It is during such transient dispersion of the clouds beneath which it is at other times concealed, that we feel the agency of heaven in the affairs of earth to be a reality and a truth. It is in such occurrences alone (distinguished in popular language from the rest, as providential) that the elements of tragedy are to be found in actual or imaginable combination. There the disclosure of the laws of the universal theocracy imparts to the scene an unrivalled interest, and to the actors in it the dignity of ministers of the will

\*Edwin the Fair: an Historical Drama. By HENRY TAYLOR, author of "Philip Van Artevelde." London: 12mo. 1842.

of the Supreme. There each event exhibits some new and sublime aspect of the divine energy working out the divine purposes. There the great enigmas of our existence, receive at least a partial solution. There, even amidst the seeming triumph of wrong, may be traced the dispensation of justice to which the dramatist is bound; and there also extends before his view a field of meditation drawn from themes of surpassing majesty and pathos.

Such is the law to which all the great tragic writers of ancient or of modern times have submitted themselves—each in his turn assuming this high office of interpreting the movements of Providence, and reconciling man to the mysteries of his being. Thus Job is the stoic of the desert—victorious over all the persecutions of Satan, till the better sense of unjust reproach and undeserved punishment breaks forth in agonies which the descending Deity rebukes, silences, and soothes. Prometheus is the temporary triumph over beneficence, of a power at once malignant and omnipotent, which, at the command of destiny, is blindly rushing on towards the universal catastrophe which is to overwhelm and ruin all things. Agamemnon returns in triumph to a home, where, during his long absence, the avenging Furies have been couching to spring at last on the unhappy son of Atreus—every hand in that fated house drooping with gore, and every voice uttering the maledictions of the infernals. Œdipus, and his sons and daughters, represent a succession of calamities and crimes which would seem to exhaust the catalogue of human wretchedness; but each in turn is made to exhibit the working of one of the most awful of the laws under which we live—the visitation of the sins of parents upon their children to the third and fourth generation. Macbeth is seduced by demoniacal predictions to accomplish the purposes, by violating the commands, of Heaven, and so to meditate, to extenuate, and to commit, the crimes suggested by the Fiend in cruel mockery. Hamlet is at once the reluctant minister and the innocent victim of the retributive justice to the execution of which he is goaded by a voice from the world of departed spirits. Lear is crushed amidst the ruins of his house, on which parental injustice, filial impiety, foul lusts, and treacherous murder, had combined to draw down the curse of the avenger. Faust moves on towards destruction under the guidance of the Fiend, who

lures him by the pride of knowledge and the force of appetite. Wallenstein plunges into destruction, drawing down with him the faithful and the good, as a kind of bloody sacrifice, to atone for treachery to which the aspect of the stars and the predictions of the diviner had impelled him. And so, through every other tragic drama which has awakened the deeper emotions of the spectator or the reader, might be traced the operation of the law to which we have referred. How far this universal characteristic of tragedy—the perceptible intervention in human affairs of powers more than human—is to be discovered in “Edwin the Fair,” the following brief and imperfect outline of the plot may sufficiently determine.

In the fresh and dewy dawn of life, Edwin and Elgiva had been wont to rove—

“O’er hill, through dale, with interlacing arms,  
And thrid the thickets where wild roses grow,  
Entangled with each other like themselves.”

But their sun had scarcely risen above the eastern horizon when the dreams of childhood faded away before the illusions of youth. He ascended the Anglo-Saxon throne, and she plighted her troth to Earl Leolf, the commander of the English armies. The Earl was “a man in middle age, busy and hard to please,” and not happy in the art of pleasing. Such, at least, was the more deliberate opinion or feeling of Elgiva. In a day of evil augury to herself, and to her house, the inconstant maiden crushed the hopes of her grave, though generous suitor, to share the crown of her early playmate.

It sat neither firmly nor easily on his brows. Athulf, the brother, and Leolf, the discarded suitor of his queen, were the chief opponents of the powerful body which, under the guidance of Dunstan, were rapidly extending over the monarchy, and the Church of England, the authority of the monastic orders. In the approaching alliance of Athulf’s family to Edwin, the Abbot of Glastonbury foresaw the transfer, to a hostile party, of his own dominion over the mind of his young sovereign. Events had occurred to enhance and justify his solicitude. Athulf’s energy had enabled Edwin to baffle the pretexts by which Dunstan had delayed his coronation. It was celebrated with becoming splendour, and was followed by a royal

banquet. The moment appeared to the king propitious for avoiding the vigilant eye of his formidable minister. He escaped from the noisy revels, and flew on the wings of love to an adjacent oratory, where, before his absence had excited the notice and displeasure of his guests, he exchanged with Elgiva the vows which bound them to each other till death should break the bond. They little dreamed how soon it should thus be broken. Resenting the indignity of the king's abrupt desertion of the festive board, the assembled nobles deputed the Abbot and the Archbishop of Canterbury to solicit, and if necessary to compel his return. They found him in the society of his newly-affianced bride, and assailed them with gross imputations, which she indignantly repelled by an open avowal of her marriage. Availing himself of the disorder of the moment, and of the canonical objections to their union, founded on their too near consanguinity, Dunstan caused them to be seized and imprisoned. Elgiva was despatched to Chester, the King and Athulf being secured in the Tower of London.

Leolf, who had absented himself from the coronation, was in command of the royal forces at Tunbridge, where he was quickly joined by Athulf, who had found the means of escaping from prison. The two earls then separated—Leolf proceeding to the north, with a part of the army, to rescue Elgiva, and Athulf assuming the conduct of the power destined for the deliverance of the King.

Whatever may have been the indignation of the confederate lords, their policy dictated pacific measures; and to these the Archbishop, offended and alarmed by the audacity of Dunstan, willingly lent himself. He convened a synod to deliberate on the validity of the royal marriage, and on the propriety of applying to Rome for a dispensation. Long and fervent debate ensued. The Church as represented in that holy conclave, had given strong indications of a conciliatory spirit, when, casting himself, in vehement prayer before a crucifix, Dunstan invoked the decision of Him whose sacred image it bore. An audible voice, which seemed to proceed from the cross, (though really uttered by a minister of the Abbot's crimes, who had been concealed for the purpose within its ample cavity,) forbade the ratification of the royal nuptials. Rising from the earth, the holy Abbot pronounced a solemn excommu-



nication of Edwin, Elgiva, and their adherents, and dismissed the assembly which had so vainly attempted to defeat the will of heaven, and of heaven's chosen minister.

The triumphant Dunstan then proceeded to the Tower, to obtain from the captive and excommunicated King the abdication of his crown. He was answered by indignant reproaches, and at length withdrew, but not till he had summoned into the royal presence an assassin, prepared to bring the controversy to a decisive and bloody close. At that instant Athulf with his forces burst into the Tower. Edwin regained his freedom, and Dunstan fled in disguise into Hampshire.

But the saint of Glastonbury possessed too powerful a hold on the attachment and reverence of the multitude, to be thus defeated by any blow however severe, or by any exposure however disgraceful. A popular insurrection in his favour arrested his flight to France. He resumed his self-confidence, appeared again in his proper character, and lifted up his mitred front, with its wonted superiority, in a Wittenagemot which he convened at Malpas. There, surrounded by his adherents and his military retainers, he openly denounced war on his sovereign.

Under the guidance of Athulf, the King had moved from London towards Chester, to effect a junction with Leolf and his army. The attempt was not successful. Impatient of her prison, Elgiva had exercised over her jailer the spell of her rank and beauty, and had rendered him at once the willing instrument and the companion of her escape. Leolf was apprized of her design, and anxious for the safety of her who had so ill-requited his devotion, advanced to meet her, supported only by a small party of his personal attendants. They met, and, while urging their flight to Leolf's army, were overtaken by a party attached to the cause of Dunstan, and slain.

For this catastrophe Dunstan was not, in intention at least, responsible. Alarmed by intelligence of a Danish invasion, he had become desirous of a reconciliation with Edwin, and was making overtures for that purpose. But it was now too late. The king, maddened by the loss of Elgiva, rushed forward with blind and precipitate haste to Malpas, where the body of his murdered wife awaited a royal sepulture, and where was intrenched the haughty

rebel who had brought her down to a premature grave. Deaf to every voice but that which from the inmost recesses of his soul cried for revenge, Edwin plunged wildly into his fate. Covered with wounds, he fell once more into the toils of his deadly enemy. An awful sound recalled him to momentary animation and strength. It was the low dirge from the choir of the neighbouring cathedral, chanting the funeral obsequies of Elgiva. He flew from his dying couch, cast himself with delirious ravings on her cold and inanimate form, and then, invoking the vengeance of heaven on their persecutor, descended with her to the grave.

Incomplete, and therefore inaccurate, as it is, this slight abridgment of the tale will show, that the dramatic action of "Edwin the Fair" is rather disastrous than tragical. We witness, indeed, the deadly conflict of thrones, spiritual and temporal. The Sceptre falls from a feeble grasp, and the Crozier is elevated in sanguinary triumph. But it is the triumph of power over weakness, of craft over simplicity, of mature worldly wisdom over childish inexperience. An overwhelming calamity befalls Edwin and Elgiva, but it is provoked neither by any gigantic guilt, nor by any magnanimous self-devotion. They perish, the victims of imprudence rather than of crime—of a rash marriage and a venial inconstancy. This is quite probable—quite in accordance with truths to be gathered from the experience of each passing day; but for that very reason, it is a fable which does not fulfil the laws imposed on the stage by *Æschylus* and *Shakspeare*—by their imitators and their critics—or rather by reason and nature herself. It does not break up our torpid habitual associations. It excites no intense sympathy. It gives birth to no deep emotion, except, indeed, regret that vengeance does not strike down the oppressor. There is a failure of poetical justice in the progress and in the catastrophe of the drama. If it were a passage of authentic history, the mind might repose in the conviction that the Judge of all must eventually do right. But as it is a fiction, it is impossible not to repine that right is not actually done. Such unmerited disasters and prosperous injustice are, we know, consistent with the presence of a superintending Deity. But they do not suggest it. The handwriting on the wall has no pregnant meaning, nor mythic significancy. It is not apparently traced by

the Divine finger, nor has the Seer given us any inspired interpretation. It is one of those legends from which a moralist might deduce important lessons of prudence, but from which a dramatist could hardly evoke a living picture of the destiny of man;—of man opposed and aided by powers mightier than his own, engaged in an unequal though most momentous conflict, impotent even when victorious, and majestic even when subdued.

This objection to the plot of his drama has evidently been anticipated by Mr. Taylor himself. He summons some dark clouds to gather around Dunstan at the moment of his success, and dismisses him from our view, oppressed by the only domestic sorrow to which his heart was accessible, and by omens of approaching calamity from an inroad of the Northmen. Thus the triumph of the wicked is tempered, and some endeavour is made to gratify, as well as to excite, the thirst for his punishment. It is hardly a successful attempt. The loss in mature life of an aged mother, is a sorrow too familiar and transitory to be accepted as a retribution for crimes of the deepest dye; and war, however disastrous to others, has seldom any depressing terrors for the rulers of mankind. Besides, there are yet some fetters, however light, which chronology will throw over the volatile spirit of poetry; and it is hard to forget the historical fact, that no Danish invasion ever disturbed the tranquillity of Dunstan; but that he lived and died in that century of repose, for which England was indebted to the wisdom and the valour of the two great predecessors of Edwin.

Mr. Taylor has therefore employed another and more effectual resource to relieve the inherent defects of the subject he has chosen. He avails himself of the opportunity it affords for the delineation and contrast of characters, which he throws off with a careless prodigality, attesting an almost inexhaustible affluence. In every passage where the interest of the story droops, it is sustained by the appearance of some new person of the drama, who is not a mere fiction, but a reality with a fictitious name. The stage is not possessed by its ancient tenants provided with a new set of speeches, but with recruits, who present some of the many aspects under which man has actually presented himself to a most sagacious and diligent observer. This, however, is not true of Dunstan, the most conspicuous of all

those who contribute to the action or to the dialogue. He is drawn, not from actual life, but from books. In the great drama of society, which is acted in our age on the theatre of the civilized world, no part has been, or could be, assigned to a Spiritual Despot, in which to disclose freely the propensities and the mysteries of his nature. The poet has therefore taken the outline from the Anglo-Saxon Chroniclers, and has supplied the details and the colouring from his own imagination. Hence the central figure is less congruous—less in harmony with itself—than those of the group by which it is surrounded; but then it is more ideal, is cast in bolder relief, and is thrown off with greater force and freedom.

The real Dunstan, the Recluse, the Saint, and the Statesman of the Tenth century, had his full share of the inconsistencies which distinguish man as he is, from man as he is painted. He was endowed with all the faculties by which great actions are achieved, and with the temperament without which they are never undertaken. Conversant in his early manhood with every science by which social life had then been improved, and by every art by which it had been embellished, his soul was agitated by ambition and by love. Unprosperous in both, his wounded spirit sought relief in solitude and penitential exercises; and an age familiar with such prodigies, regarded with astonishment and reverence the austerity of his self-discipline. When, at length, he emerged from the grave, (for in that similitude he had dug his cell,) he was supposed by others, and probably by himself, to have buried there all the tastes and the passions which had once enslaved him to the world. But other spirits as secular as the first, though assuming a holier garb, had entered his bosom, and taken up their abode there. All the energies once wasted on letters, music, painting, and science, or in the vain worship of her to whom his young heart had been devoted, were henceforth consecrated to the church and to his order. He became the foremost champion of sacerdotal celibacy and monastic retirement; assumed the conduct of the war of the regular against the secular clergy; and was the founder of the ecclesiastical system which continued for five centuries to control all the religious, and to affect all the political institutions of his native land.

But the Severn leaping down the rocks of Plinlimmon,

and the same stream when expanded into a muddy and sluggish estuary, does not differ more from itself, than St. Dunstan the Abbot of Glastonbury, from Dunstan the Metropolitan of the Church, and the Minister of the Crown of England. During five successive reigns, all the powers of the government were in his hands, but he ruled ingloriously. When his supreme power had once been firmly secured, all the fire and genius of his earlier days became extinct. With the sublime example of Alfred, and the more recent glories of Athelstan before his eyes, he accomplished nothing and attempted nothing for the permanent welfare of his country. No one social improvement can be traced to his wisdom or munificence. He had none of the vast conceptions, and splendid aims, which have ennobled the usurpations of so many other churchmen. After an undisputed possession of power of forty years' continuance, he left the State enfeebled, and the Crown in hopeless degradation. To him, more than to any man, must be ascribed the ruin of the dynasty under which he flourished, and the invasions which desolated the kingdom during half a century from his death. He had commanding talents and dauntless courage, but a low, narrow, selfish spirit. His place in the Roman calendar was justly assigned to him in acknowledgment of his incomparable services to the Papacy; but he has no station in the calendar of the great and good men who, having consecrated the noblest gifts of nature and of fortune to their proper ends, live for the benefit of all generations, and are alike revered and celebrated by all.

The Dunstan of this tragedy is not the lordly churchman reposing in the plenitude of success, but the fanatic grasping at supreme command. He is the real hero of "Edwin the Fair," towering over all his associates, and distinguished from them all by a character, which, in the full and proper sense of the term, may be pronounced to be dramatic. He is at once the victim of religious misanthropy and self-adoration. He has worshipped the world, has been rejected by his idol, and has turned away mortified, but not humbled, to meditate holier joys, and to seek an eternal recompense. But, in the pursuit of these sublime objects, he is haunted by the memory of the delights he has abandoned; and of the injustice which has expelled him from the ways and the society of mankind. These thoughts distil their bitterness even into his devotions. His social



affections droop and wither as their proper aliment is withdrawn. His irascible feelings deepen, and pass into habits of fixed antipathy and moroseness. To feed these gloomy passions he becomes the calumniator of his species, incredulous of human virtue, and astute in every uncharitable construction of human motives. His malignity establishes a disastrous alliance with his disordered piety. He ascribes to the Being he adores the foul passions which fester in his own bosom. His personal wrongs are no longer the insignificant ills of an individual sufferer, nor have his personal resentments the meanness of a private revenge—for his foes are antagonists of the purposes of heaven; and to crush them can be no unacceptable homage to the Supreme Arbiter of rewards and punishments. With the cold unsocial propensities of a withered heart, disguised from others and from himself by the sophistries of a palsied conscience, Dunstan finds his way back to the busy world. He lives among men to satiate an ambition such as might be indulged by an incarnation of the Evil Spirit—an ambition exulting in conscious superiority, and craving for the increase and the display of it, but spurning and trampling in the dust the victims over whom it triumphs. Patriotism, loyalty, humility, reverence—every passion by which man is kind to his brethren—all are dead in him; and an intense selfishness, covered by holy pretexts, reigns in undisputed sovereignty in his soul. Man is but the worthless instrument of his will; and even to his Creator he addresses himself with the unawed familiarity of a favourite. Proud, icy-cold, and remorseless, he wades through guilt sneeringly and exultingly—the subject of a strange spiritual disease, compounded of a paralysis of all the natural sympathies, and a morbid vigour of all the mental energies. This portrait is terrible, impressive, and (unhappily) not improbable. It labours, however, under one inconsistency.

The fanaticism of Dunstan, as delineated in this tragedy, is wanting in one essential element. He has no profound or deeply cherished convictions. He does not believe himself to be the selected depositary of divine truth. He does not regard dissent from his own opinions as criminal; nor does he revel in any vindictive anticipations of the everlasting wo of his theological antagonists. He is not clinging to any creed which, if rejected by others, may elude

his own grasp. The enemies of the Church are indeed his enemies; but they are so because they endanger his power, not because they disturb the repose or the self-complacency of his mind. He has (to borrow the distinction of a great writer) the fanaticism of the scourge, the brand, and the sword, without having the fanaticism of the creed. He is a fanatic, without being an enthusiast. His guilt is not extenuated by any passionate attachment for truth or sanctity, or for what he believes to be true and sacred. He rushes into oppression, treachery, fraud, and plunder, not at the impulse of a disordered imagination, but at the bidding of a godless, brotherless heart.

This absence of theological hatred, founded on the earnest attachment to some theological opinions, impairs both the congruity and the terror of Dunstan's dramatic character. He is actuated by no passion intense enough to provoke such enormous guilt; or familiar enough to bring him within the range of our sympathies; or natural enough to suggest, that some conceivable shifting of the currents of life might hurry us into some plunge as desperate as that which we see him making. His homicides are not bloody sacrifices, but villanous murders. His scourge is not the thong of Dominic, so much as the lash with which Sancho (the knave!) imposes on the credulity of his master. His impious frauds are not oracular deceptions, but the sleight-of-hand tricks of a juggler. He is waited on by an imp of darkness, who is neither man nor fiend; for he perpetrates the foulest crime, without malignity or cupidity, or any other obvious motive. He slaughters Elgiva and Leolf; raises his hand to assassinate the king; and, at Dunstan's command, climbs a tree, to howl there like the Devil; and then enters the cavity of the crucifix, to utter a solemn response in the person of the Redeemer.

The objection to this is not the improbability, but the revolting hatefulness of the guilt which Dunstan and his minister divide between them. Unhappily it is not historically improbable, but the reverse. Sanguinary and devious have been the paths along which many a canonized saint has climbed that celestial eminence. Tricks, as base and profane as that of Dunstan's crucifix, have been exhibited or encouraged, not merely by the vulgar heroes, but by some of the most illustrious fathers of the Church. But if they violated the eternal laws of God, it was to ac-

comply what they devoutly believed to be the divine will. Saints and sinners might agree in the means to be used, but they differed entirely as to the ends to be accomplished. Ambrose, preaching at Milan over the bleeding remains of the disinterred martyrs, lent himself to what he must have suspected or known to be a lie. But the lie was told and exhibited for the confutation of the Arians, to which holy object Ambrose would as readily have sacrificed his life. And though evil done that good may come, be evil still—nay, an evil peculiarly pestilent and hard to be forgiven—yet there is, after all, a wide difference between Bishop Bonner and Jonathan Wilde. Devout fanaticism, if it may not extenuate, does at least sublimate crime. By the intensity of his convictions, the greatness of his aims, and the energy of his motives, the genuine fanatic places himself beyond the reach of contempt, of disgust, or of unmixed abhorrence. We feel that, by the force of circumstances, the noblest of men might be betrayed into such illusions, and urged into such guilt as his. We acknowledge that, under happier auspices, he might have been the benefactor, not the curse of his species. We perceive that, if his erring judgment could be corrected, he might even yet be reclaimed to philanthropy and to peace. If we desire that retributive justice should overtake him, the aspiration is, that he may fall “a victim to the gods,” and not be hewed as “a carcass for the hounds.” Not such is the vengeance we invoke on the dramatic Dunstan and his ministering demon. We upbraid the tardiness of human invention, which laboured a thousand years in the discovery of the treadmill. Or rather our admiration of the genius which created so noble an image of intellectual power, ruthless decision, and fearful hardihood, is alloyed by some resentment that the poet should so have marred the work of his own hands. How noble a work it is will be best understood by listening to the soliloquy in which Dunstan communes with his own heart, and with his Maker, on the commission intrusted to him, and on the spiritual temptations he has to encounter in the discharge of it:—

“ Spirit of speculation, rest, oh rest!  
 And push not from her place the spirit of prayer!  
 God, thou’st given unto me a troubled being—  
 So move upon the face thereof, that light  
 May be, and be divided from the darkness!

Arm thou my soul that I may smite and chase  
 The spirit of that darkness, whom not I  
 But Thou thro' me compellest.—Mighty power,  
 Legions of piercing thoughts illuminate,  
 Hast Thou committed to my large command,  
 Weapons of light and radiant shafts of day,  
 And steeds that trample on the tumbling clouds.  
 But with them it hath pleased Thee to let mingle  
 Evil imaginations, corporal stings,  
 A host of imps and Ethiops, dark doubts,  
 Suggestions of revolt.—Who is't that dares"—

In the same spirit, at once exulting, self-exploring, and irreverent, Dunstan bursts out in a sort of pæan on his anticipated success, as he enters the Tower to persuade the abdication of his sovereign.

"Kings shall bow down before thee, said my soul,  
 And it is even so. Hail, ancient Hold!  
 Thy chambers are most cheerful, though the light  
 Enter not freely; for the eye of God  
 Smiles in upon them. Cherish'd by His smile  
 My heart is glad within me, and to Him  
 Shall testify in works a strenuous joy.  
 —Methinks that I could be myself that rock  
 Whereon the Church is founded,—wind and flood  
 Beating against me, boisterous in vain.  
 I thank you, Gracious Powers! Supernal Host!  
 I thank you that on me, though young in years,  
 Ye put the glorious charge to try with fire,  
 To winnow and to purge. I hear you call!  
 A radiance and a resonance from Heaven  
 Surrounds me, and my soul is breaking forth  
 In strength, as did the new-created Sun  
 When Earth beheld it first on the fourth day.  
 God spake not then more plainly to that orb  
 Than to my spirit now. I hear the call.  
 My answer, God, and Earth, and Hell shall hear.  
 But I could reason with thee, Gracious Power,  
 For that thou givest me to perform thy work  
 Such sorry instruments."

The spirit thus agitated had not always been a prey to disquieting thoughts. Dunstan had once loved as other men love, and even on his seared heart were engraven recollections which revive in all their youthful warmth and beauty as he contemplates the agonies of his captive king, and tempts him to abdicate his crown by the prospect of his reunion to Elgiva.

"When Satan first  
 Attempted me, 'twas in a woman's shape;  
 Such shape as may have erst misled mankind,  
 When Greece or Rome uprear'd with Pagan rites  
 Temples to Venus, pictured there or carved  
 With rounded, polish'd, and exuberant grace,  
 And mien whose dimpled changefulness betray'd,  
 Thro' jocund hues, the seriousness of passion.  
 I was attempted thus, and Satan sang,  
 With female pipe and melodies that thrill'd  
 The soften'd soul, of mild voluptuous ease,  
 And tender sports that chased the kindling hours  
 In odorous gardens or on terraces,  
 To music of the fountains and the birds,  
 Or else in skirting groves by sunshine smitten,  
 Or warm winds kiss'd, whilst we from shine to shade  
 Roved unregarded. Yes, 'twas Satan sang,  
 Because 'twas sung to me, whom God had call'd  
 To other pastime and severer joys.  
 But were it not for this, God's strict behest  
 Enjoin'd upon me,—had I not been vow'd  
 To holiest service rigorously required,  
 I should have owned it for an Angel's voice,  
 Nor ever could an earthly crown, or toys  
 And childishness of vain ambition, gauds  
 And tinsels of the world, have lured my heart  
 Into the tangle of those mortal cares  
 That gather round a throne. What call is thine  
 From God or Man, what voice within bids thee  
 Such pleasures to forego, such cares confront?"

Dunstan is a superb sophister. Observe with what address he reconciles himself to the fraud so coarse and degrading as that of making his instrument, Gurmo, shake the forest with dismal howlings, to intimate to the passers-by that the hour of fierce conflict between the Saint and the Prince of Darkness had arrived. Contempt of mankind, and of his supposed adversary, are skilfully called up to still the voice of honour and the remonstrances of conscience.

"And call'st thou this a fraud, thou secular lack-brain?  
 Thou loose lay-priest, I tell thee it is none.  
 Do I not battle wage in very deed  
 With Satan? Yea, and conquer! And who's he  
 Saith falsehood is deliver'd in these howls,  
 Which do but to the vulgar ear translate  
 Truths else to them ineffable? Where's Satan?



His presence, life and kingdom? Not the air  
 Nor bowels of the earth, nor central fires  
 His habitat exhibits; it is here,  
 Here in the heart of Man. And if from hence  
 I cast him with discomfiture, that truth  
 Is verily of the vulgar sense conceived,  
 By utterance symbolic, when they deem  
 That, met in bodily oppugnancy,  
 I tweak him by the snout. A fair belief  
 Wherein the fleshy and the palpable type  
 Doth of pure truth substantiate the essence.  
 Enough. Come down. The screech-owl from afar  
 Upbraids thy usurpation. Cease, I say."

It is with admirable truth and insight into human character that Dunstan is made to resort to artifices, as various as the occasions suggesting them, to evade the expostulations with which conscience still tracks him in the path of guilt. From scorn of man he passes to a kind of adoration of the mystical abstract Being, to which, in the absence of more palpable idols, it is so easy to render an extravagant homage. What a labyrinth of gigantic, vague, half-conceived images is it into which he plunges, in the endeavour to sustain his own mind, by contemplating the majesty and the holiness of the impersonation in the cause of which he is willing to believe himself engaged.

"The Church is great,  
 Is holy, is ineffably divine!  
 Spiritually seen, and with the eye of faith,  
 The body of the Church, lit from within,  
 Seems but the luminous phantom of a body;  
 The incorporeal spirit is all in all.  
 Eternity *a parte post et ante*  
 So drinks the refuse, thins the material fibre  
 That lost in ultimate tenuity  
 The actual and the mortal lineaments,  
 The Church in Time, the meagre, definite, bare,  
 Ecclesiastical anatomy,  
 The body of this death translates itself,  
 And glory upon glory swallowing all  
 Makes earth a scarce distinguishable speck  
 In universal heaven. Such is the Church  
 As seen by faith; but otherwise regarded,  
 The body of the Church it search'd in vain  
 To find the seat of the soul; for it is nowhere.  
 Here are two Bishops, but 'tis not in them."

To the dramatic character of Dunstan, the antithesis is that of Wulfstan the Wise. An idealist arrested in the current of life by the eddy of his own thoughts, he muses away his existence in one long, though ever-shifting dream of labours to be undertaken, and duties to be performed. Studious of books, of nature, of the heart, and of the ways of man, his intellectual wealth feeds a perennial stream of discourse, which, meandering through every field of speculation, and in turns enriching all, still changes the course it ought to pursue, or overflows the banks by which it should be confined, as often as any obstacle is opposed to its continuous progress. Love, poetry, friendship, philosophy, war, politics, morals, and manners, each is profoundly contemplated, eloquently discussed, and helplessly abandoned, by this master of ineffectual wisdom: and yet he is an element in society which could be worse spared than the shrewdest practical understanding in the Camp or the Exchange. His wide circuit of meditation has made him catholic, charitable, and indulgent. In the large horizon which his mental eye traverses, he discerns such comprehensive analogies, such countless indications of the creative goodness, and such glorious aspects of beauty and of grace, as no narrower ken could embrace, and no busier mind combine and harmonize. To form such combinations, and to scatter prodigally around him the germs of thought, if happily they may bear fruit in intellects better disciplined, though less opulent than his own, is the delight and the real duty of Wulfstan, the colloquial. His talk, when listeners are to be had, thus becomes a ceaseless exercise of kindness; and even when there are none to heed him, an imaginary circle still enables him to soliloquize most benevolently. In this munificent diffusion of his mental treasures, the good man is not merely happy, but invulnerable. Let fortune play her antics as she will, each shall furnish him with a text; and he will embellish all with quaint conceits or diagnostic expositions. His daughter steals an unworthy match; but he rebounds from the shock to moralize on parental disappointment and conjugal constancy. He is overborne and trampled down by the energy of Dunstan, and immediately discovers in his misadventure a proof how well the events of his own age are adapted for history; and how admirably a retirement to Oxford will enable himself to become the historian. Could Samuel Taylor Coleridge

have really thus blossomed in the iron age of the Anglo-Saxons? It is a hard problem. But the efflorescence of his theatrical representative is rendered probable to all who ever performed the pilgrimage to the Hierophant at Highgate, in the golden era of George IV. Never was there a group of auditors better disposed or better able to appreciate the wisdom of a sage, than those who are collected round Wulfstan. See with what fine discrimination and keen relish his portrait is sketched by one of them.

“ Still

This life and all that it contains, to him  
Is but a tissue of illuminous dreams  
Fill'd with book wisdom, pictured thought, and love  
That on its own creations spends itself.  
All things he understands, and nothing does.  
Profusely eloquent in copious praise  
Of action, he will talk to you as one  
Whose wisdom lay in dealings and transactions;  
Yet so much action as might tie his shoe  
Cannot his will command; himself alone  
By his own wisdom net a jot the gainer.  
Of silence, and the hundred thousand things  
'Tis better not to mention, he will speak,  
And still most wisely—But, behold! he comes.”

Leolf, who thus delineates the character of Wulfstan, is about to announce to the old man the secret marriage of his daughter; and as the earl cautiously approaches the unwelcome topic, the philosopher finds in each turn of the discourse some theme which hurries him away to a boundless distance from the matter in hand. Obeying the law by which his own ideas are associated, but with the tendency observable in all dreamers, sleeping or waking, to reconcile the vision with any suggestion from without, he involves himself in an inquiry how a man in middle life should wed, and on that critical topic thus makes deliverance:—

“ Love changes with the changing life of man:  
In its first youth, sufficient to itself,  
Heedless of all beside, it reigns alone,  
Revels or storms, and spends itself in passion.  
In middle age—a garden through whose soil  
The roots of neighbouring forest-trees have crept—  
It strikes on stringy customs bedded deep,

Perhaps on alien passions; still it grows  
 And lacks not force nor freshness: but this age  
 Shall aptly choose as answering best its own,  
 A love that clings not, nor is exigent,  
 Encumbers not the active purposes,  
 Nor drains their source; but proffers with free grace  
 Pleasure at pleasure touch'd, at pleasure waved  
 A washing of the weary traveller's feet,  
 A quenching of his thirst, a sweet repose  
 Alternate and preparative, in groves  
 Where loving much the flower that loves the shade,  
 And loving much the shade that that flower loves,  
 He yet is unbewilder'd, unenslaved,  
 Thence starting light, and pleasantly let go,  
 When serious service calls."

Mr. Shandy's expenditure of eloquence on the death of his son, was not more consolatory to the bereaved rhetorician, than are the disquisitions of Wulfstan on his daughter's undutiful marriage. She must no longer be mutable of purpose. She must study the excellent uses of constancy, and abide in quietude of mind. The fickle wind may be her teacher. Then, as if himself floating on the wings of some soft and balmy gale, the poetical sage drowns all his parental anxieties in this light and beautiful parable:—

"The wind, when first he rose and went abroad  
 Thro' the vast region, felt himself at fault,  
 Wanting a voice; and suddenly to earth  
 Descended with a wafture and a swoop,  
 Where, wandering volatile from kind to kind,  
 He woo'd the several trees to give him one.  
 First he besought the ash; the voice she lent  
 Fitfully with a free and lashing change  
 Flung here and there its sad uncertainties:  
 The aspen next; a fluttered frivolous twitter  
 Was her sole tribute: from the willow came,  
 So long as dainty summer dress'd her out,  
 A whispering sweetness, but her winter note  
 Was hissing, dry, and reedy: lastly the pine  
 Did he solicit, and from her he drew  
 A voice so constant, soft, and lowly deep,  
 That there he rested, welcoming in her  
 A mild memorial of the ocean cave  
 Where he was born."

The spirit of rumination possesses all the persons of this drama. No wonder, then, that Leolf feeds on his own thoughts, as best becomes a discarded lover. But of that deplorable class of mankind, he is a remarkable, if not altogether a new variety. He had climbed the central arch in the bridge of life, painfully conscious of the solitude of his heart in the midst of the busy crowd, and cherishing a vague but earnest desire for deliverance. An ideal form, lovely as the day-spring, and radiant with love to him, haunted his path, and he lived in the faith that the bright reality would at length be disclosed, when his spirit should know the blessedness of that union which mystically represents to man the design and the perfection of his being. She came, or seemed to come, in the form of Elgiva—the glorious impersonation of that dazzling fantasy—the actual fulfilment of many a dream, too fondly courted by his solemn and overburdened mind. Nature had made her beautiful, and, even when the maiden's ruby lips were closed, her beaming eye and dimpled cheek gave utterance to thoughts, now more joyous or impassioned, now more profound or holy, than any which could be imparted through the coarser vehicle of articulate speech. So judged the enamoured interpreter of that fair tablet—mistaking for emanations of her mind the glowing hues reflected by the brilliant surface from his own. He threw over the object of his homage all the most rich and graceful draperies stored in the wardrobe of his own pensive imagination; unconsciously worshipped the creature of his own fancy; and adorned her with a diadem which, though visible to him alone, had for a true heart a greater value than the proudest crown which could be shared with kings.

Such was not Elgiva's judgment. Her ear drank in the flatteries of Edwin; nor had he long to sue for the hand which had been plighted to the champion and defender of his throne. A ready vengeance was in the grasp of Leolf. One word from him would have sealed the doom of his successful rival. But no such words passed his lips. In his solitude he probes the incurable wound which had blighted all the hopes, and dispelled all the illusions of life. He broods with melancholy intentness over the bleak prospect, and drains to the dregs the bitter cup of irremediable desolation. But in his noble spirit there is no place for scorn, resentment, or reproach. His duty, though it be



to protect with his life the authors of his wretchedness, is performed in the true spirit of duty;—quietly, earnestly, and without vaunt or ostentation. He has sympathy to spare for the sorrows of others, while demanding none for his own. He extenuates with judicial rectitude and calmness Elgiva's infidelity to himself, and loyally dies to restore her to the arms of her husband.

Leolf is the portrait of a man in whose mind justice, in the largest conception of the word, exercises an undisputed sway;—silencing, though it cannot assuage, the deepest sorrow, representing all the importunities of self-love, restraining every severe and uncharitable censure, and exciting the faithful, though unrequited, discharge of all the obligations of loyalty, and love, and honour. The world in which we live abounds in models, which may have suggested, by the power of contrast, this image of a statesman and a soldier. Haughty self-assertion is not merely pardoned in our public men, but takes its place among their conventional virtues. We are accustomed to extol that exquisite sensitiveness which avenges every wrong, and repels every indignity, even though the welfare of our common country be the sacrifice. To appreciate the majesty of a mind which, in the most conspicuous stations of life, surrenders itself to the guidance of perfect equity—and of humility, the offspring of equity; which has mastered resentment and pride as completely as all the baser passions—we must turn from the real to the mimetic theatre, and study man not as he actually is, in camps and parliaments, but as he is here exhibited on the stage.

Relieved from attendance on his feeble sovereign and faithless queen, Leolf (a great soliloquist) takes his stand on the sea-shore, and thus gives utterance to the thoughts which disappointment had awakened in his melancholy, though well-balanced mind:—

“Rocks that beheld my boyhood! Perilous shelf  
That nursed my infant courage! Once again  
I stand before you—not as in other days  
In your gray faces smiling—but like you  
The worse for weather. Here again I stand,  
Again, and on the solitary shore  
Old ocean plays as on an instrument,  
Making that ancient music, when not known?  
That ancient music only not so old  
As He who parted ocean from dry land

And saw that it was good. Upon my ear,  
 As in the season of susceptible youth,  
 The mellow murmur falls—but finds the sense  
 Dull'd by distemper; shall I say—by time?  
 Enough in action has my life been spent  
 Through the past decade, to rebate the edge  
 Of early sensibility. The sun  
 Rides high, and on the thoroughfares of life  
 I find myself a man in middle age,  
 Busy and hard to please. The sun shall soon  
 Dip westerly,—but oh! how little like  
 Are life's two twilights! Would the last were first  
 And the first last! that so we might be soothed  
 Upon the thoroughfares of busy life  
 Beneath the noon day sun, with hope of joy  
 Fresh as the morn,—with hope of breaking lights,  
 Illuminated mists and spangled lawns  
 And woodland orisons and unfolding flowers,  
 As things in expectation.—Weak of faith!  
 Is not the course of earthly outlook, thus  
 Reversed from Hope, an argument to Hope  
 That she was licensed to the heart of man  
 For other than for earthly contemplations,  
 In that observatory domiciled  
 For survey of the stars?"

It is in his last interview with Elgiva that the character of Leolf is best exhibited. He has rescued her from captivity, and, during a transient pause in her flight with him to Edwin, the inconstant Queen expresses her gratitude, and suggests her contrition. It is a scene of pathos and dignity which we should rejoice to transfer into our pages, but which would be impaired by abridgment, and is too long for quotation as it stands.

If Leolf is the example of the magnanimous endurance of the ills of life, Athulf, his friend and brother soldier, is the portrait of a man born to encounter and to baffle them. It is drawn with the elaborate care, and touched and re-touched with the parental fondness with which authors cherish, and sometimes enervate, their favoured progeny. Unfortunately, Athulf is surrounded by a throng of dramatic persons, who afford him no sufficient space for action or for speech. We become acquainted with him chiefly by observing the impression he leaves on the minds of his associates, his enemies, and his friends. Wulfstan the Wise is one of these; and he will describe Athulf with a warmth

and vigour which it is impossible to emulate, although it must be admitted to be not inconsiderably abstruse—an infirmity to which the good Wulfstan is greatly addicted.

“ Much mirth he hath, and yet less mirth than fancy.  
His is that nature of humanity  
Which both ways doth redound, rejoicing now  
With soarings of the soul, anon brought low:  
For such the law that rules the larger spirits.  
This soul of man, this elemental crisis,  
Completed, should present the universe  
Abounding in all kinds; and unto all  
One law is common,—that their act and reach  
Stretch'd to the farthest is resilient ever,  
And in resilience hath its plenary force.  
Against the gust remitting fiercelier burns  
The fire, than with the gust it burnt before.  
The richest mirth, the richest sadness too,  
Stands from a groundwork of its opposite;  
For these extremes upon the way to meet  
Take a wide sweep of Nature, gathering in  
Harvests of sundry seasons.”

With Dunstan, Leolf, Wulfstan, and Athulf, are associated a rich variety of other characters—some elaborately, some slightly, sketched—and some exhibited in that rapid outline which is designed to suggest, rather than to portray the image which occupies the poet's fancy. There is Odo the Archbishop, the sport of the winds and currents, into which this victim of dignity and circumstances is passively borne—a sort of *rouge dragon*, or *clarenceux* king-at-arms, hurried by some misadventure in feats of real chivalry, with nothing but tabard and mantle to oppose to the sharp sword and heavy battle-axe;—and Clarenbald, by office a Lord Chancellor, a pompous patronising appendage of royalty, who, in an age of war and treason, and amidst the clash of arms, is no better than a kind of master of the ceremonies in the *Aula Regia*;—and Ruold, a hair-brained gallant, whom the frown of a polished brow, or the smile of a dimpled cheek, will mould to the fair one's purposes, though faith, life, and honour should be the forfeit:—and Edwin himself, the slave in turn of every passion which assails him, love, anger, despondency, impatience, and revenge, ever wasting his energies to no purpose, and playing the fool with the indefeasible dignity of him who at once wears and worships an hereditary crown; and Elgiva,

the storm-compelling beauty, who sets a world in flames, and who has proceeded from the hands of her dramatic creator with a character entirely neutral and unformed; in order that all may ascribe to her such fascinations as may best explain to each the mystery of her influence over the weak and the wise, the feeble and the resolute;—and Emma, a damsel whose virtue (for she is virtuous and good, and firm of heart) is but little indebted to her discretion; for the maiden is possessed by the spirit of intrigue and intermeddling, and, at his bidding, assumes by turns the disguises of a wife, of a strolling minstrel, and of a priest, to disentangle the webs which she has spun; and there are military leaders and ecclesiastics, fortune-tellers and scholars, jesters, swineherds, and foresters—to each of whom is assigned some share in the dialogue or in the plot—which glows like the firmament with stars of every magnitude, clustering into constellations of endless variety.

This crowding of the scene at once conduces to the beauty, and impairs the interest of this drama. If our arithmetic fail us not, there appear on the stage not fewer than fifty interlocutors, who jostle and cross each other—impede the development of the fable, and leave on the mind of the reader, or of the spectator, an impression at once indistinct and fatiguing. It is not till after a second or a third perusal, that the narrative or succession of events emerges distinctly from the throng of the doings and the sayings. But each successive return to this drama brings to light, with a still increasing brilliancy, the exquisite structure of the verse, the manly vigour of thought, and the deep wisdom to which it gives most musical utterance; the cordial sympathy of the poet with all that is to be loved and revered in our common nature, and his no less generous antipathy for all that debases and corrupts it; his sagacious and varied insight into the chambers of imagery in the human heart; and the all-controlling and faultless taste which makes him intuitively conscious of the limits which separate the beautiful from the false, the extravagant, and the affected.

A great writer is his own most formidable rival. If “Edwin the Fair” shall fail of due acceptance, it will be more to “Philip Van Artevelde” than to any other hostile critic that such ill success will be really owing. Mr. Taylor has erected a standard by which he must be measured

and judged. The sect of the 'Takersdown is a large and active fraternity, among whom there are never wanting some to speak of powers impaired, and of exhausted resources. Untrue, in fact, as such a censure would be, it would not be quite destitute of plausibility. "Philip Van Artevelde" has a deeper and more concentrated interest than "Edwin the Fair." It approaches far more nearly to the true character of tragedy. Virtues, hazardous in their growth, majestic in their triumph, and venerable even in the fall, shed a glory round the hero, with which the guilt and the impunity of Dunstan form a painful contrast. The scene of the play, moreover, is more warm and genial, and the versification flows more easily, and in closer resemblance to the numerous prose of Massinger and of Fletcher. There is also less of the uniformity which may be observed in the style of "Edwin," where churchmen, laics and ladies, are all members of one family, and have all the family failing, of talking philosophy. The idle King himself moralizes not a little; and even the rough huntsman pauses to compare the fawning of his dogs with the flatteries of the court. But if the earlier work be the greater drama, the later is assuredly the greater poem. More abundant mental resources of every kind are there—knowledge more comprehensive—an imagination at once more prompt and more discursive—the ear tuned to a keener sense of harmony—the points of contact and sympathy with the world multiplied—and the visible traces of that kind influence which passing years have obviously shed on a mind always replete with energy and courage, but which had not, till now, given proof that it was informed in an equal degree by charity, benevolence, and compassion.

It is, indeed, rather as a poet than as a dramatist that Mr. Taylor claims the suffrage of those with whom it rests to confer the high reward of his labours. In a memorable essay, prefixed to his former tragedy, he explained and vindicated, not his dramatic but his poetical creed, and then, as now, proceeded to illustrate his own doctrines. To the credit of having discovered any latent truth, or of having unfolded any new theory of the sublime art he pursues, he, of course, made no pretension. It would have been utterly at variance with the robust sense which is impressed on every page he writes. His object was to refute a swarm of popular sectarians, by proclaiming anew



the ancient and Catholic faith. As the first postulate of his argument, he laid it down, that if a man would write well, either with rhythm or without, it behooved him to have something to say. From this elementary truth, he proceeded to the more abstruse and questionable tenet, that "no man can be a very great poet who is not also a great philosopher."

To what muse the highest honour is justly due, and what exercises of the poetic faculty ought to command, in the highest degree, the reverence of mankind, are problems not to be resolved without an inquiry into various recondite principles. But it is a far less obscure question what is the poetry which men do really love, ponder, commit to memory, incorporate into the mass of their habitual thoughts, digest as texts, or cherish as anodynes. This is a matter of fact, which Paternoster Row, if endowed with speech, could best determine. It would be brought to a decision, if some literary deluge (in the shape, for example, of a prohibitory book-tax) should sweep over the land—consigning to the abyss our whole poetical patrimony, and all the treasures of verse accumulated in our own generation. In that frightful catastrophe, who are the poets whom pious hands would be stretched out to save? The philosophical? They would sink unheeded, with Lucretius at their head. Or the allegorical? The waves would close unresistingly over them, though the Faery Queen herself should be submerged. Or the descriptive? Windsor Forest and Grongar Hill would disappear, with whole galleries of inferior paintings. Or the witty? In such a tempest even Hudibras would not be rich enough to attract the zeal of the Salvors. Or the moral? Essays on man, with an infinite variety of the "pleasures" of man's intellectual faculties, would sink unwept in the vast whirlpool. There, too, would perish, Lucan, with a long line of heroic cantos, romances in verse, and rhymes—amorous, fantastic, and Bacchanalian. But, at whatever cost or hazard, leaves would be snatched, in that universal wreck, from the digressions and interstitial passages of the three great Epics of Greece, Italy, and England. The bursts of exultation and agony in the "Agamemnon" would be rescued; with some of the Anthologies, and a few of the Odes of Anacreon and Horace. There would be a sacred emulation to save, from the all-absorbing flood, "*L'Allegro*" and "*Il Penseroso*;"

with the "Odes and Fables of Dryden," "Henry and Emma," the "Rape of the Lock," and "the Epistle to Abelard;" Gray's "Bard," and "Elegy," Lord Lyttleton's "Monody," "The Traveller," "The Deserted Village," and "The Task," Mr. Campbell's Shorter Poems, and some of Mr. Wordsworth's Sonnets; while the very spirit of martyrdom would be roused for the preservation of Burns, and the whole Shakspearian theatre; ballads and old songs out of number; much devotional Psalmody, and, far above all the rest, the inspired songs of the sweet singer of Israel.

No man, says Dr. Johnson, is a hypocrite in his pleasures. At school we learn by heart the *De Arte Poeticâ*. At College we are lectured in the Poetics. Launched into the wide world, we criticise or write, as it may happen, essays on the sublime and beautiful. But on the lonely sea-shore, or river-bank, or in the evening circle of family faces, or when the hearth glows on the silent chamber round which a man has ranged the chosen companions of his solitary hours, with which of them does he really hold the most frequent and grateful intercourse? Is it not with those who best give utterance to his own feelings, whether gay or mournful; or who best enable him to express the otherwise undefinable emotions of the passing hour? Philosophy is the high privilege of a few, but the affections are the birthright of all. It was an old complaint, that when wisdom lifted up her voice in the streets, none would regard it; but when was the genuine voice of passion ever unheeded? It is the universal language. It is the speech intelligible to every human being, though spoken, with any approach to perfection, by that little company alone, who are from time to time inspired to reveal man to himself, and to sustain and multiply the bonds of the universal brotherhood. It is a language of such power as to reject the aid of ornament, fulfilling its object best when it least strains and taxes the merely intellectual faculties. The poets, whom men secretly worship, are distinguished from the rest, not only by the art of ennobling common subjects; but by the rarer gift of imparting beauty to common thoughts, interest to common feelings, and dignity to common speech. True genius of this order can never be vulgar, and can, therefore, afford to be homely. It can never be trite, and can, therefore, pass along the beaten paths.

What philosophy is there in the wail of Cassandra? in the last dialogue of Hector and Andromache? in Gray's "Elegy?" or in the Address to "Mary in Heaven?" And yet when did philosophy ever appeal to mankind in a voice equally profound? About four-and-twenty years ago Mr. Wolfe established a great and permanent reputation by half a dozen stanzas. Almost as many centuries have passed since the great poetess of Greece effected a similar triumph with as small an expenditure of words. Was Mr. Wolfe a philosopher, or was Sappho? They were simply poets, who could set the indelible impress of genius on what all the world had been feeling and saying before. They knew how to appropriate for ever to themselves a combination of thoughts and feelings, which, except in the combination, have not a trace of novelty, nor the slightest claim to be regarded as original. In shorter terms, they knew how to write heart language.

A large proportion of the material of which the poetry of David, Æschylus, Homer, and Shakspeare is composed, if presented for use to many of our greatest writers in its unwrought and unfashioned state, would infallibly be rejected as common-place, and unworthy of all regard. Our poets must now be philosophers; as Burke has taught all our prose writers, and most of our prosaic speakers to be, at least in effort and desire. Hence it is that so large a part of poetry which is now published is received as worthy of all admiration, but not of much love—is praised in society, and laid aside in solitude—is rewarded by an undisputed celebrity, but not by any heartfelt homage—is heard as the discourse of a superior, but not as the voice of a brother.

The diligent students and cultivated admirers of poetry will assign to the author of "Edwin the Fair" a rank second to none of the competitors for the laurel in his own generation. They will celebrate the rich and complex harmony of his metre, the masculine force of his understanding, the wide range of his survey of life and manners, and the profusion with which he can afford to lavish his intellectual resources. The mere lovers of his art will complain, that in the consciousness of his own mental wealth, he forgets the prevailing poverty; that he levies too severe a tribute of attention, and exacts from a thoughtless world meditations more deep, and abstractions more pro-

longed, than they are able or willing to command. Right or wrong, it is but as the solace of the cares, and as an escape from the lassitude of life, that most men surrender their minds to the fascination of poetry; and they are not disposed to obey the summons to arduous thinking, though proceeding from a stage resplendent with picturesque forms, and resounding with the most varied harmonies. They will admit that the author of "Edwin the Fair" can both judge as a philosopher, and feel as a poet; but will wish that his poetry had been less philosophical, or his philosophy less poetical. It is a wish which will be seconded by those who revere his wisdom, and delight in his genius; and who, therefore, regret to anticipate that his labours will hardly be rewarded by an early or an extensive popularity.

THE END.





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